



**DAILY BRIEFING** May 5, 2005

**Panel urges overseas base realignment slowdown**

By George Cahlink

An independent panel is raising concerns about the Pentagon's plan to reposition military forces around the globe and is suggesting that the overseas realignment of troops and bases be slowed down.

"The sequencing and pace of the proposed realignments could harm our ability to meet broader national security and could impact both the military's ability to protect national interests and the quality of life of the servicewomen and men affected by the realignment," stated [a report](#) from the Overseas Basing Commission, a six-member panel appointed by Congress to review the U.S. overseas basing plans.

The Pentagon is not required to enact the report's recommendations, only take them under advisement.

The report comes the week before the Defense Department is set to announce its recommendations for closing and realigning bases in the United States. The commission did not review domestic basing, but its recommendations on overseas basing could have an impact on whether more space is needed stateside for the 70,000 troops returning from Europe.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld has said that the impact of the base realignment and closing process would not be as severe as once expected because more bases would be needed as the military pulled forces out of Western Europe. The report suggests those movements should be smaller and might be years away.

The commission did say that it fully backed the need to reposition forces around the globe in light of new security concerns. But it recommended the efforts be "slowed and reordered" to ensure better coordination across the government.

A chief concern is that the Defense Department has made little effort to coordinate the realignment of forces overseas with other federal agencies that have a stake in national security matters - ranging from diplomacy to commerce. The report says there is no "interagency entity" charged with coordinating the repositioning and determining the impact it would have on all activities related to national security.

Other recommendations and concerns cited by the report were:

- The Pentagon has estimated the costs at \$9 billion to \$12 billion, but the commission says the tab is probably closer to \$20 billion.
- Withdrawing all heavy Army forces in Europe could harm the service if new conflict broke out in the Balkans. The panel recommended keeping a least one heavy brigade in Europe rather than returning it stateside until the Balkan and Iraqi missions are complete.
- The Marine Corps should curtail plans to move large numbers of personnel out of Okinawa, Japan.
- Delaying overseas movements until the Pentagon settles on plans for domestic military base closings (BRAC), completes the Quadrennial Defense Review and other key ongoing studies.



## **DAILY BRIEFING** May 5, 2005

### **Lawmaker warns on using authorization to delay base closings**

By Megan Scully

A senior Republican on the House Armed Services Readiness Subcommittee said Thursday that attempts to use the defense authorization bill to delay or cancel the 2005 round of base closings could ultimately burden military installations around the country.

Rep. John Hostettler, R-Ind., has supported failed efforts in previous bills to stall the Base Closure and Realignment Commission. But he said a threatened presidential veto of an authorization bill delaying BRAC would hold up military construction and other funding for the Defense Department.

Lawmakers are discussing last-minute ways to stop the new round of BRAC, but Hostettler said it "won't happen anyway, and [we won't] get other initiatives through."

President Bush threatened last year to veto the fiscal 2005 defense authorization bill if it contained language to delay BRAC.

The House, led by Armed Services Readiness Subcommittee Chairman Joel Hefley, R-Colo., and ranking member Solomon Ortiz, D-Texas, voted to delay BRAC from 2005 to 2007 as part of its bill. The Senate narrowly defeated the amendment, clearing the way for this round of base closings.

Rep. Gene Taylor, D-Miss., said he is not concerned with a veto threat. "How many bills has the president vetoed?" he said Thursday. "None." Taylor, a longtime opponent of this base-closing round and a member of the Armed Services Readiness Subcommittee, said he expects "new allies" after Defense Secretary Rumsfeld releases his recommended list of closings and realignments next week.

Hostettler joined members of the Indiana delegation Thursday highlighting the value of the Hoosier State's military installations. The members made their case to keep Indiana bases open, repeatedly sighting the installations' joint capabilities and contributions to conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Military value is the top criteria the Defense Department and the independent BRAC commission use when deciding to shutter a base.

Indiana's bases, including Grissom Air Reserve Base and Crane Naval Surface Warfare Center, are "combat multipliers," said Veterans Affairs Chairman Buyer. Crane is the only major active-duty installation in Indiana.

After the Defense secretary's list is made public, the independent BRAC commission will have four months to study the recommendations before submitting its list to the president Sept. 8. The president then reviews the list and either sends it back to the commission for more work or forwards it to Congress. Lawmakers can pass a joint resolution to reject the entire list, an unlikely and unprecedented move.

**DAILY BRIEFING** May 6, 2005

**Rumsfeld sees fewer base closings in upcoming round**

By John Freis

Far fewer U.S. military bases are likely to be closed and realigned than originally foreseen, in part because of plans to shift tens of thousands of troops from Asian and European bases back to the United States, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said in a conference call Thursday with newspaper editorial writers around the country.

Rumsfeld said surplus base capacity is not as great as earlier estimated, the Associated Press reported. "Without final figures, I would say the percent will be less than half of the 20-25 percent that has been characterized previously," Rumsfeld said, according to two writers who were on the call.

Rumsfeld previously had predicted the upcoming round will result in less shrinkage than 20-25 percent, but he had not previously said it might be less than half that amount.

Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, said in an interview today that in a February meeting, Rumsfeld told him and Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison, R-Texas, that about 15 percent of base capacity would be cut. Rumsfeld has until May 16 to recommend which domestic bases should be closed or realigned. His recommendations will then be considered by the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission.

Meanwhile, the fiscal 2005 wartime supplemental spending bill awaiting action by the Senate next week includes language requiring a report on the reuse and redevelopment of military installations affected by next round of closings.

Senate Armed Services Chairman John Warner, R-Va., originally proposed the requirement in the Senate last month. House and Senate conferees later included the language in the conference agreement. The House approved the conference report Thursday.

The redevelopment report likely will detail how the military will clear closed installations for other uses, as well as the department's plans and responsibilities for environmental clean-up and restoration.

Lawmakers have been particularly concerned about the reuse of closed bases, pressing BRAC Chairman Anthony Principi on the issue during his confirmation hearing in March. Roughly 140,000 acres slated for closure by the Defense Department during previous BRAC rounds have not been officially closed, primarily because of delays associated with environmental cleanup.

Philadelphia Inquirer  
May 6, 2005

### **Rumsfeld Expects Fewer U.S. Bases Will Be Shut**

*The new round of closings will be less severe, he said, citing the need for facilities for returning troops and their families.*

By Dave Montgomery, Inquirer Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON - Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld yesterday scaled back the projected impact of closing and consolidating military bases, saying the United States may have much less excess capacity at its domestic installations than previously thought.

"Without final figures, I would say the percent will be less than half of the 20 to 25 percent that has been characterized previously," Rumsfeld said in a conference call with newspaper editorial writers days before releasing a list of recommended base closings and consolidations.

Rumsfeld's statement brightens the prospects for hundreds of towns and cities that have spent more than two years trying to protect installations they consider essential to their communities' economic futures.

Rumsfeld had said that U.S. military bases had 25 percent more capacity than they needed, raising fears that the forthcoming round of closings could be far more severe than four previous rounds.

But in his discussions with editorial writers at several papers, he said a number of factors had prompted him to change his assessment. U.S. bases will be needed to accommodate more than 70,000 troops and at least 100,000 dependents being returned from overseas bases in Asia and Europe, he said.

He also said Pentagon teams drawing up the list of recommendations had concluded that many Defense Department employees now working in leased space could be moved onto government-owned property, enabling the government to further save money by jettisoning much of its leasing costs.

Rumsfeld has a May 16 deadline to present the report to a nine-member base-closing commission that will spend the next four months preparing a final report for President Bush. Previous base-closing commissions have accepted 85 percent of the Pentagon's recommendations.

Pentagon spokesman Glenn Flood said Rumsfeld would likely present his recommendations next Friday.

The final draft is still being prepared under intense secrecy by two executive steering committees made up of top military and senior civilian officials.

Since the base closings started nearly two decades ago, the government has shut down 97 major bases and hundreds of smaller installations with a net savings of \$28.9 billion. This year's round is the fifth since 1988.

While Rumsfeld's revised calculations presumably would reduce the number of targeted bases, community leaders and save-our-base task forces throughout the country are anxiously awaiting the Pentagon list. Those that land on it will battle to persuade the base-closing commission to strike them from the list.

Led by Anthony J. Principi, former secretary of Veterans Affairs, the nine-member commission began work this week and will hold regional hearings and on-site reviews. The commission can strike a base from the list with a five-vote majority. Adding a facility not recommended by the Pentagon requires a seven-vote super majority to put it under consideration and a second super-majority vote to put it on the list.

The Department of Defense oversees at least 425 major installations and 3,700 smaller facilities, some no larger than small leased offices in strip shopping centers.

"Most of the action will not be closures, but in realignments, jobs moving around," said Loren Thompson, an analyst at the Lexington Institute, a defense-policy research group.

The 2005 restructuring of America's bases is the first since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, and will be tailored to fit the needs of the fight against terrorism and combat deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Boston Globe  
May 6, 2005

### **Mass. Officials Urge Westover Be Kept Open**

Political leaders from Massachusetts urged the US Air Force yesterday to give careful consideration to the merits of Westover Joint Air Reserve Base in Chicopee, as the Pentagon prepares its final recommendations for military base closings. "Its value has been demonstrated time and again, from the quarter of a million flights launched in support of the Berlin airlift to its status as the busiest C-5 [transport] operating center in the world during Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Desert Storm," Senator Edward M. Kennedy; Senator John F. Kerry; Representative Richard E. Neal, Democrat of Springfield; and Governor Mitt Romney wrote in a letter to Acting Air Force Secretary Michael L. Dominguez and General John P. Jumper, Air Force chief of staff.

National Journal's CongressDaily  
May 5, 2005

### **Hostettler Warns On Using Authorization To Delay BRAC**

A senior Republican on the House Armed Services Readiness Subcommittee said today that attempts to use the defense authorization bill to delay or cancel the 2005 round of base closings could ultimately burden military installations around the country. Indiana Rep. John Hostettler has supported failed efforts in previous bills to stall the Base Closure and Realignment Commission.

But he said a threatened presidential veto of an authorization bill delaying BRAC would hold up military construction and other funding for the Defense Department. Lawmakers are discussing last-minute ways to stop the new round of BRAC, but Hostettler said it "won't happen anyway, and [we won't] get other initiatives through."

President Bush threatened last year to veto the FY05 defense authorization bill if it contained language to delay BRAC. The House, led by Armed Services Readiness Subcommittee Chairman Joel Hefley, R-Colo., and ranking member Solomon Ortiz, D-Texas, voted to delay BRAC from 2005 to 2007 as part of its bill.

The Senate narrowly defeated the amendment, clearing the way for this round of base closings. Rep. Gene Taylor, D-Miss., said he is not concerned with a veto threat. "How many bills has the president vetoed?" he said today. "None." Taylor, a longtime opponent of this base-closing round and a member of the Armed Services Readiness Subcommittee, said he expects "new allies" after Defense Secretary Rumsfeld releases his recommended list of closings and realignments next week.

Hostettler joined members of the Indiana delegation today highlighting the value of the Hoosier State's military installations. The members made their case to keep Indiana bases open, repeatedly sighting the installations' joint capabilities and contributions to conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Military value is the top criteria the Defense Department and the independent BRAC commission use when deciding to shutter a base.

Indiana's bases, including Grissom Air Reserve Base and Crane Naval Surface Warfare Center, are "combat multipliers," said Veterans Affairs Chairman Buyer. Crane is the only major active-duty installation in Indiana. After the Defense secretary's list is made public, the independent BRAC commission will have four months to study the recommendations before submitting its list to the president Sept. 8. The president then reviews the list and either sends it back to the commission for more work or forwards it to Congress. Lawmakers can pass a joint resolution to reject the entire list, an unlikely and unprecedented move.

--Megan Scully

Boston Globe  
May 7, 2005

### **Rumsfeld Cuts Base-Impact Estimate**

#### ***Fears remain about Hanscom, Natick***

By Robert Burns, Associated Press

WASHINGTON -- Far fewer military bases are likely to be closed and realigned than originally foreseen, in part because of the planned shift of tens of thousands of troops from bases in Asia and Europe to the United States, according to Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld.

Rumsfeld said surplus base capacity is not as great as earlier estimated, an assessment that is expected to comfort many communities hoping to retain the bases they rely on for an economic boost.

"Without final figures, I would say the percent will be less than half of the 20 to 25 percent that has been characterized previously," Rumsfeld said in a conference call Thursday with newspaper editorial writers across the country, according to two writers who participated in the call.

Rumsfeld had previously said the current round of base closings and realignment, the first since 1995, would result in less shrinkage of base capacity than the 20- to 25-percent figure the Pentagon has cited for the past few years. He now says it might be less than half that range.

Nevertheless, Massachusetts officials bracing to save Hanscom Air Force Base in Bedford and the Army Soldier Systems Center in Natick said yesterday that the Pentagon chief's comments do not assuage their fears of closure or downsizing.

The facilities are primarily engaged in cutting-edge research and are not traditional military installations that could easily host fighting units returning from abroad, they said.

"It doesn't have much impact on Hanscom, because they are not going to be moving more troops there," said Cort Boulanger, vice president of the Massachusetts High Technology Council, which is spearheading efforts to inoculate Hanscom and Natick, including the passage last year of a \$400 million state plan to expand the Bedford complex.

Council president Christopher Anderson added, "Our strength will be research capabilities and the ability to expand to attract new missions. That continues to be the primary factor in determining the future of Hanscom and Natick."

Local officials also pressed their case yesterday for other New England bases they fear could be on the chopping block when Rumsfeld makes his recommendations to an independent commission as early as next week.

Governor Mitt Romney, who along with Senator Edward M. Kennedy chairs the council's Defense Technology Initiative, toured Barnes Air National Guard in Westfield and Westover Air Reserve Base in Chicopee. Romney, who toured the bases with US Representatives John W. Olver and Richard E. Neal, said the state has a plan to lobby the federal government heavily if any Massachusetts bases are marked for closure.

Other bases that could be on forthcoming closure list include Otis Air Force Base on Cape Cod, which also houses Air National Guard units; Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Maine, and Brunswick Naval Air Station in Brunswick, Maine.

"With our military deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan, as we continue our multifront war on terrorism, and with the potential return to the United States of 70,000 servicemen and women, given the closure of military bases overseas, it simply does not make sense to close our domestic bases," Senator Olympia J. Snowe, Republican of Maine, said in a statement.

Senator John Cornyn, Republican of Texas, said yesterday that in a meeting on Feb. 8, Rumsfeld told him and Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison that about 15 percent of base capacity would be cut.

The Pentagon declined to release a transcript of Rumsfeld's remarks to the editorial writers until their editorials have been published. But two of the writers confirmed yesterday that Rumsfeld made the statement that the reduction in base capacity would be less than half the 20 to 25 percent range.

Jill "JR" Labbe, editorial writer for the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, said she pressed Rumsfeld on this point, noting that his words suggested that only 10 to 12 percent of capacity would be eliminated in this round of base closings. She said Rumsfeld did not dispute her characterization. "He did not try to back off on that," she said.

Andrea D. Georgsson, editorial writer for the Houston Chronicle, confirmed that Rumsfeld did not object to the 10- to 12-percent estimate, though he did not use those figures in his own comments.

*Bryan Bender of the Globe staff contributed to this report.*

Los Angeles Times  
May 7, 2005

### **City Wants Pentagon To Close Naval Station**

***Other communities hope to retain military bases, but Concord sees its 12,800-acre site as a place to build houses, stores, schools, parks.***

By Tony Perry, Times Staff Writer

CONCORD, Calif. — As the Pentagon prepares a list of military bases it wants to close, communities throughout California are pleading to have their bases spared. Not Concord.

Officials in this middle-class suburb 30 miles northeast of San Francisco have asked the Pentagon to close the 12,800-acre Concord Naval Weapons Station so it can be turned over for private development.

"It's a jewel just waiting to be developed," said Nicholas Virgallito, president and chief executive of the Concord Chamber of Commerce.

Officials view the site, valued at \$1 billion, as one of the last largely undeveloped stretches in the San Francisco Bay Area.

City planners have tentative proposals for 13,500 homes, a shopping center, a light-industrial park, libraries, schools and thousands of acres of grassy parkland.

Former Concord Mayor Dan Helix said that using the acreage for homes might help ease the spiraling price of housing in this city of 121,000.

"The great American dream is owning your own home, but it's becoming impossible," said Helix, a retired Army major general. "This property could help change that."

The Pentagon must release its list by May 16, beginning a review process by a presidential commission that will lead to a final decision by President Bush and Congress. California has more bases than any other state.

"The base is a relic," said Concord Mayor Laura Hoffmeister, left from the days when Northern California had other Navy bases, now closed. "We could do great things there."

The 5,170-acre inland portion of the base has been unused since the late 1990s. The 7,630-acre tidal area, where activity has dwindled, remains the military's only West Coast port for moving large quantities of ammunition, making that section's closure less likely.

Even if the Concord weapons station were on the closure list, the process for the city to gain control would be long, complex, and politically controversial.

The slow-growth movement, a powerful force in Northern California, is likely to oppose large-scale residential development.

"When the list comes out, communities that are losing bases will be going through the four stages of grief: denial, anger, compromise and, finally, acceptance," said James Forsberg, director of planning and economic development for Concord. "We figure the Navy will be eager to work with us instead."

The base, a former homeport for warships, is no longer the hub of activity it was during World War II and the Vietnam War.

Civilian employment at the station once exceeded 3,000 workers. As recently as 1994, the station employed 1,074 civilians. Now the base has about 110 civilian workers.

Only five ships are expected to be loaded with ammunition at the station's piers on Suisun Bay this year.

The 220 ammunition shelters of so-called Magazine City in the inland area are empty. Cows graze on the tall grass; tule elk roam the rolling hills.



"There has got to be a better use of this prime piece of property than a bunch of cows," said Helix, a member of the California Council on Base Support and Retention assembled by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Once the weapons station was a round-the-clock operation, with 330 Marines assigned as guards.

Now the buildings on the inland portion are a ghost town. The hospital, chapel and officer housing are locked. The baseball field is unused.

The current condition of the inland portion of the base, said City Manager Ed James, represents "the worst possible scenario" for Concord: no jobs, no revenue and continued deterioration of the existing facilities.

The Concord City Council asked the retention council to recommend closing the weapons station. Instead, the retention council's final report merely notes the station's presence without arguing that it should be kept open.

After talking with Concord officials, Rep. George Miller (D-Martinez) wrote to the Pentagon recommending the closure of the weapons station but retention of another base: Travis Air Force Base in Fairfield.

In 1999, military and city officials began discussing the possibility of allowing development on the inactive part of the Concord base. But the heightened security precautions invoked after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks ended those discussions.

The waterfront portion of the base, where deep-draft cargo ships are loaded with ammunition headed for forward deployed Navy ships and land troops, is under the control of the Army.

There is a monument tended by the National Park Service at the waterfront to commemorate the explosions of July 17, 1944, that killed 320 sailors, two-thirds of them African Americans, at what was then called Port Chicago.

The disaster led to a boycott by other sailors and a court-martial tinged with the racial discrimination that was a part of the segregated military of that era. It also led to changes in safety procedures, and there has never been a repeat of the 1944 explosions.

City officials say the best chance for gaining part of the base lies in the 5,170-acre inland portion that is unused and is outside the "blast arc" area that would be damaged if the station ever again suffered an explosion on the loading docks. Homes have already been built to the fence.

Ships loaded here provide firepower to ships and troops in the Western Pacific, including those on alert for possible conflict with North Korea.

"This is a force projection platform for that area," said Army Lt. Col. David R. McClean, who runs the Concord station.

If the Pentagon does not list the tidal portion of the base on its closure list, it is scheduled for a five-year, \$27.5-million upgrade to provide better security and improved piers.

As the day for the list to be unveiled approaches, Concord officials are cautiously optimistic that the Pentagon will agree that the base should be closed.

"We're hoping the Pentagon says, 'Sounds good to us,' " said Linda Best, executive with the Contra Costa Economic Partnership.

Arizona Republic (Phoenix)  
May 7, 2005

### **Arizona Bases 'Optimistic'**

#### ***Rumsfeld likely to put fewer bases at risk***

By Billy House, Republic Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON - Arizona officials said they were encouraged Friday to learn that the Pentagon will recommend far fewer military bases to be closed or realigned than anticipated because space is needed for the return of about 70,000 troops from installations overseas.

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld is expected to unveil his list of targeted bases next Friday, rather than on May 16, the deadline.

Officials in Gov. Janet Napolitano's office said they remained "cautiously optimistic" that the state's military installations will escape being targeted for closure.

At stake in Arizona could be 83,500 jobs and more than \$5.6 billion in annual economic benefits represented by the Valley's Luke Air Force Base, Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in Tucson, Fort Huachuca in Sierra Vista and the Army's Yuma Proving Ground and Yuma Marine Corps Air Station, as well as other, less-mentioned military facilities.

Lt. Col. Rose-Ann Lynch, a Pentagon spokeswoman, would not comment Friday about what Rumsfeld said about closures to newspaper editorial writers in a conference call on Thursday. The Pentagon would not release a transcript.

Rumsfeld and other military officials previously had estimated that 20 to 25 percent is excess capacity at the nation's 425 military facilities, indicating that as many as 100 bases across the country could end up on the chopping block.

The plan had been for the Pentagon to eliminate enough base capacity to save about \$7 billion a year while creating what military officials call a "faster, lighter, smarter" military force in which various branches could train and work together.

But in the conference call with editorial writers from newspapers around the country, Rumsfeld volunteered that the reduction in base capacity instead will be about half of that to accommodate the shift of tens of thousands of troops from Asia and Europe coming back home.

Lynch said the Pentagon would not release a transcript of Rumsfeld's remarks until Tuesday, when newspapers' editorials about the topics are expected to have been published.

But two of the writers confirmed in telephone interviews with Associated Press on Friday that Rumsfeld made the statement that the reduction in base capacity would be less than half the 20 to 25 percent range.

J.R. Labbe, editorial writer for the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, said that she pressed Rumsfeld on this point, noting that his words suggested only 10 to 12 percent of capacity would be eliminated in this round of base closings. She said Rumsfeld did not dispute her characterization.

"He did not try to back off on that," she told AP.

Andrea D. Georgsson, editorial writer for the *Houston Chronicle*, confirmed that Rumsfeld did not object to the 10 to 12 percent estimate.

Rumsfeld also told the editorial writers that he has not made his final decisions about which bases to include on his list to be given to the nine-member independent Base Realignment and Closure Commission by May 16, which then must give its own list to President Bush in the fall.

Arizona, like other states with military facilities, has been busy maneuvering to protect its five main installations. Officials also have been moving to protect other facilities, such as Silverbell Army Heliport at Marana and Naval Observatory Flagstaff Station, and to keep alive Army and Air National Guard unit stations in or near Phoenix, Tucson, Florence and Flagstaff.

Last summer, Bush announced plans to bring home about 70,000 troops from Germany and South Korea, along with their 100,000 dependents, as a major part of an adjustment to global forces.

Rep. Trent Franks, R-Ariz., of the House Armed Services Committee, said that he and other members of Congress have been trying to persuade the Pentagon to keep some excess space at military bases.

"Some of us have been advocating a 'surge capacity' for a long time, because we believe it is a lot more important to have additional capacity than to have to rebuild or build a major (military facility) later," he said.

"From my perspective, this is good news for Luke," Franks said of Rumsfeld's comments.

Luke alone pumps \$1.4 billion a year into the local economy, and many West Valley businesses depend on the base for revenue.

Jeanine L'Ecuyer, a spokeswoman for Napolitano, said: "Our honest reaction is that we continue to be cautiously optimistic in this process. We've done a lot to convince the federal government that our military installations are vital, and waiting is nerve-racking. The idea that perhaps we will need the capacity available on Arizona bases is encouraging."

Retired Brig. Gen. R. Thomas Browning co-chaired the Governor's Military Facilities Task Force, which worked to devise a strategy for protecting Arizona's bases. He said Rumsfeld's comments indicate that "statistically, our chances have improved."

"This is an interesting development," Browning said, "but the only important thing at the end of the day is who is on the list."

Honolulu Star-Bulletin  
May 6, 2005

### **Isles Optimistic In Base Closures**

*The Pentagon's list is due to be published no later than May 16*

By Gregg K. Kakesako

Local businesses and some congressional leaders are cautiously optimistic that the islands will escape base closures or realignments.

They are basing their optimism on military expansion: the Army's latest \$1.5 billion Stryker Brigade unit at Schofield Barracks and the possibility of one of the Navy's 12 aircraft carriers being based at Pearl Harbor.

Earlier this week, Anthony Principi, chairman of the Base Closure and Realignment Commission, warned that the next round of U.S. military base closings "will be tsunamis in the communities they hit."

The Pentagon, by law, has to publish the base closure list no later than May 16 in the Federal Register.

But there have been rumblings that the list, which will determine the future of some of the country's 425 major installations, could come as early as Tuesday.

The Pentagon's 2003 real property inventory notes that Hawaii has 37 major installations larger than 10 acres.

Of the 245,485 acres the military uses in Hawaii, it only owns 158,404 acres.

U.S. Sen. Daniel Inouye, a ranking member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, noted through a spokesman that "the state's role is even more important now that a Stryker Brigade will be based in Hawaii, which could also be home to an aircraft carrier group."

But Mike Yuen, Inouye's spokesman, added, "Until the Pentagon releases its BRAC report, which could happen as early as next week, it is premature at this time to speculate about possible base closures or realignments."

Yuen said Inouye has always recognized that "Hawaii has a vital role in the nation's defense in the Pacific, and that analysts consider Asia to be a region that needs to be closely monitored."

The Navy still has not released the findings of a \$1.8 million study that was started last year to determine whether Pearl Harbor could support an aircraft carrier and where to station more than six dozen jet fighters, tankers and helicopters.

Suggestions have included splitting the carrier's air wing, using Marine Corps Base Hawaii in Kaneohe and Hickam Air Force Base to house the aircraft.

Once the base closure list is announced, Principi's commission will hold 15 hearings, especially in the communities most affected, before sending its recommendation to President Bush by Sept. 8. Bush will then have until Sept. 23 to reject the list or forward it to Congress.

Congress has 45 days to approve or reject the list in its entirety.

Since 1988, 451 installations, including Barbers Point Naval Air Station in Kalaeloa in 1999, have been eliminated or realigned. The base closures in 1988, 1991, 1993 and 1995 saved about \$29 billion, the General Accountability Office reported recently.

Jim Tollefson, president of the Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii, said local business leaders decided to shy away from hiring expensive Washington lobbyists as was done by states like Texas, California and Massachusetts.

Instead, business leaders here decided to rely on signals sent by the Pentagon, such as the decision to convert a 25th Infantry Division unit into the Army's fifth Stryker Brigade Combat Team. Tollefson believes these decisions reinforce the idea of the "island's strategic location" in the Pacific.

Tollefson said that for the past five years as a member of the chamber's military affairs committee, he has traveled to Washington, D.C. annually, where the Hawaii's business delegation was briefed by congressional and Pentagon leaders.

He said that he has seen "a definite shift in the emphasis from Europe and the Atlantic to the Pacific and Asian continents."

More and more, Tollefson said, Pentagon planners are turning their attention to places like Korea, Indonesia and China.

Tollefson said he interprets that to mean "at the end of the day, the chance there will be a larger military presence here is greater than a smaller military presence."

Denver Post  
May 6, 2005  
Pg. 1

### **Open Arms In Colo. Springs**

By Erin Emery, Denver Post Staff Writer

Colorado Springs - Proof of this city's might as a military town lies not only in the strength of its soldiers, cadets and airmen, but also in its numbers.

In Colorado Springs, 30,196 uniformed personnel work at five installations, and 69,166 other people receive paychecks because of defense dollars, said Jeff Crank, vice president of the Greater Colorado Springs Area Chamber of Commerce.

Business and political leaders are optimistic that even more military jobs could come soon.

By May 16, the Pentagon will announce which military installations it plans to close or scale back as part of its Base Realignment and Closure, or BRAC, plan.

Colorado Springs' leaders believe the city could receive new Army and Air Force jobs from bases that will be closed.

A decade ago, the last time the Pentagon closed military bases, city leaders worried publicly. They raised \$500,000 for a "Keep Fort Carson" campaign, sent lobbyists to Washington and brought the chief of staff of the Army to Fort Carson to tour the mountain post.

This time, one measure of their confidence is the amount of money raised for a similar campaign: zilch.

"There haven't been any rumblings that have caused that level of alarm," said Rocky Scott, chief executive of the Greater Colorado Springs Economic Development Corp.

Sen. Wayne Allard, a former member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, said he believes all the bases in Colorado will survive.

During the last BRAC process, in 1995, the Army closed Fitzsimons Army Medical Center in Aurora and pared operations at Pueblo Chemical Depot.

This time around, active- duty, National Guard and Reserve units could be moved or reconfigured. A brigade at Fort Carson, for instance, could be sent to Texas and a unit from Texas moved to Fort Carson.

"My sense is that we're in very good shape, for both the Air Force and the Army to benefit," said Rep. Joel Hefley, Colorado Springs' longtime representative, who is a member of the House Armed Services Committee and chairman of the subcommittee on readiness, which oversees the base- closure process.

After the BRAC announcement, the Pentagon this summer will announce whether it will close bases in Europe, home to 70,000 U.S. troops.

"I do think the plan is to move two divisions out of Europe," Hefley said. "I would be amazed if some of that movement didn't come to Fort Carson. I think it will. I think we may have a net plus on this base-closing process."

Nearly 15,000 soldiers are stationed at Fort Carson, although most of them are currently serving in Iraq. This fall, an additional 3,700 troops from the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry from Korea will be temporarily located at Fort Carson. BRAC will probably determine whether that move will be permanent.

In the decade since the last BRAC, \$750 million has been spent to turn Fort Carson into a state-of-the-art training ground. And a \$30 million request for fiscal year 2006 to build a buffer zone around the post indicates the Pentagon is planning on Fort Carson being a key training ground for years to come.

"I would say that Fort Carson has become a very modern installation," said Ed Whitcraft, deputy director of public works for the post. "We've torn down a lot of the World War II wood. We have a community, a family atmosphere. It's much more family-oriented."

Colorado Springs is also keenly watching any decision regarding Los Angeles Air Force Base in El Segundo, Calif.

The base is home to the Space and Missile Center, employs 8,000 engineers and scientists, and oversees a staggering \$6 billion a year in federal contracts for space projects.

Last year, Colorado Springs raised \$200,000 to study how it compares with other cities, should the base in Los Angeles close.

The study highlighted the solid industrial resources and a highly competitive workforce in the city of about 380,000 but said more must be done to develop academic and research- and-development support for the industry.

Philadelphia Inquirer  
May 6, 2005

### **Santorum Fights To Keep Base Open**

***The Willow Grove military site could be on a list of possible closings. The senator cited security risks.***

By Marc Schogol, Inquirer Staff Writer

Closing the Willow Grove Naval Air Station and Joint Reserve Base would be an indefensible military mistake, U.S. Sen. Rick Santorum said yesterday.

With the Defense Department expected to release a list of recommended base closings next week, Santorum, a Republican facing a tough reelection fight next year, said he is functioning as a lobbyist and advocate for all Pennsylvania bases.

"This is exactly what the military says we want from our bases," Santorum said after a tour of the Willow Grove base, one of only three nationwide with Reserve and National Guard flight units from all of the military services.

Santorum also said that he would make the case that closing Willow Grove would be a threat to homeland security.

While no bases have yet been identified, many fear the prime closure risks in the Philadelphia area are Willow Grove, near the Montgomery County-Bucks County border, and the Defense Supply Center in Northeast Philadelphia.

After the Defense Department releases its list of recommended base closings, a special Base Realignment and Closure Commission appointed by President Bush will evaluate it and report its recommendations to the President and, ultimately, Congress. But Congress could only approve or disapprove it as a whole.

This is the fifth study by the commission. Philadelphia was the only major city to take big hits in each of the first four, including the Philadelphia Navy Base in 1996.

Santorum said yesterday that Pennsylvania has been hit disproportionately and that, this time, "they should look elsewhere."

The state's other senator, fellow Republican Arlen Specter; Gov. Rendell, a Democrat; and other officials also are mobilized to fight for Pennsylvania's bases. Santorum said any such fight would be bipartisan.

When the last base review was held in 1994, Willow Grove was on the initial list of bases recommended for closing.

That narrow escape persuaded the Willow Grove Chamber of Commerce to form a Regional Military Affairs Committee and retain two consulting firms to muster statistics and studies documenting what they say would be a disastrous economic impact on the area if the base closed.

Those studies will be presented to the commission if it tours Willow Grove, which it would do if the Defense Department recommends its closure.

Some of the concerns for the 1,200-acre Willow Grove facility, which employs 7,779 people, stem from "a lack of a current mission," said Edward Strouse, vice president of the Chamber of Commerce.

Although some military personnel based at Willow Grove have been and currently are on active duty in Iraq, the primary aircraft based at Willow Grove are older models that are being phased out or replaced, Strouse said.

"We're heavily campaigning to bring missions in so our base will be that much stronger going forward," he said.

Enid (OK) News & Eagle  
May 7, 2005

### **Congressional Offices Expect 24-Hour Notice Before Base Closing List Released**

By Cindy Allen

Congress and the public will be given a 24-hour notice before the Department of Defense releases its list of Base Realignment and Closure recommendations, according to an Oklahoma congressional official. They won't know the contents of the list, only that the announcement will be made.

"We're going to know 24 hours beforehand," Jim Luetkemeyer, press secretary for U.S. Rep. Frank Lucas said. He said an announcement will be made giving the time and date the Department of Defense will release to the public its BRAC recommendations. It is expected senators and members of Congress will get some kind of advance notice about the contents of the list, but that notice will be in a very short time frame before the public announcement.

What no one knows yet, however, is what day this will happen. The deadline for the announcement is May 16, but most believe the announcement actually will occur earlier next week.

Sen. Jim Inhofe has announced he intends to travel to all five of Oklahoma's military installations during a statewide tour Friday. He is expected to be at Vance Air Force Base at 12:15 p.m. to hold a press conference. A spokesman with his Tulsa office said they believe the list will be released between 9 and 10 a.m. Friday.

However, Luetkemeyer said Lucas' office expects the announcement to come before Friday, possibly Wednesday or Thursday.

"We don't know for sure," he said. "They (DOD) had not determined what day it would be."

Luetkemeyer said Lucas' office has been told that the list will not only have closures, but also realignments.

"We expect it will also have explanations and descriptions of those alignments," he said. "We expect it to be the whole enchilada."

Mike Cooper, chairman of Vance Development Authority and the Oklahoma committee on BRAC, will be in Washington next week in anticipation of an announcement.

North County (CA) Times  
May 7, 2005

### **Military Update**

#### **This BRAC Round Could Spark Smaller Retiree Migration**



By Tom Philpott

Sometime between now and May 16, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld will release a list of military bases the department wants closed, labeling it unneeded infrastructure that wastes billions of dollars annually.

Community leaders in affected areas will express shock and anger.

Paid lobbyists will begin pumping out reasons why a new nine-member Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission should spare particular bases from the final list to be sent the White House by Sept. 8.

And tens of thousands of military retirees who rely on these bases for medical care, cost-free drugs, discount shopping and more will wonder whether to pull up roots and move near a base not on the BRAC list.

The size of retiree migrations from past BRAC rounds is a mystery. Defense officials who oversee installations say they have no such data. Neither does the Government Accountability Office, which carefully has studied the impact of previous BRAC rounds

But there's general agreement among BRAC experts that the next round of closings should trigger smaller retiree migrations than past rounds.

They point to two healthcare options enacted since BRAC 1995 that should ease the expense for retirees of living without a base. They are TRICARE for Life, the robust insurance supplement to Medicare for service elderly, and the increasingly popular TRICARE mail order pharmacy plan.

They also cite a boom in commercial discount stores, such as Wal-Mart and Price Club, which now compete for customers with military base stores.

Several Arizona cities commissioned a study in 2002 to measure the effect of nearby bases on their economies. The study contractor, Maguire Company of Phoenix, found it reasonable in conducting its analysis to assume that 25 percent of military retirees living within 50 miles of a base were so "linked" to its amenities that they would leave the area if the base closed.

The 25 percent was no more than a guess, the study suggested.

Yet a professor at Rutgers University, Michael J. Lahr, used the figure last year in a study for the governor of New Jersey to estimate the impact of base closures in that state. Lahr conceded in his report that he was unable to find any information on the "probable proportion of military retirees" who would relocate "if all military bases in New Jersey were shuttered."

Lahr wrote that he was using the 25 percent estimate used in Arizona his own economic models because there "is no reason to believe that New Jersey-base military retirees would behave any differently."

Sociology professor Mark Fagan at Jacksonville State University in Jacksonville, Ala., actually surveyed retirees living in Calhoun County, home of Fort McClellan, in 1995 after the Pentagon released its last BRAC list. Fifty-four percent of respondents said they would leave the county if McClellan closed.

But when the base finally did, in 1999, there was no follow-up census to learn how many of the surveyed retirees actually did move. Whatever the percentage was, Fagan suggested in a recent phone interview, fewer retirees likely would migrate today from a new BRAC area.

“With Wal-Mart super-centers and with internet shopping,” he said the financial impact for retirees of losing base access “has gone down.”

That doesn’t mean, he added, retirees won’t miss their bases.

“These military people are socialized to live together,” said Fagan. “They are conditioned to the pomp and ceremony and status” of being part of a military community that recognizes their careers and rank. “The nostalgia is very strong to be around a base, around that military culture.”

Fagan said he recently proposed to local community leaders that they encourage developers to turn portions of McClellan, including base housing, the golf course, ponds and walking trails, into a retirement community where retirees who never left the area could share in that nostalgia again.

The lack of hard facts about retiree migration from BRAC rounds shouldn’t obscure some harsh realities. One reason retirees might not flee is housing prices often plummet in the months following release of a BRAC list.

Rep. Gene Taylor (D-Miss.), perhaps the toughest critic of BRAC 2005 in Congress, calls it “incredibly wasteful” and illogical, given that the nation is at war in Iraq and Afghanistan and that the Pentagon has a re-basing plan set that will relocate to stateside bases more than 70,000 service members and 100,000 dependents and defense civilians now assigned overseas.

Taylor charges Rumsfeld and staff with pulling “out of thin air” their early estimate for this BRAC round that the military is burdened with 24 percent excess base capacity. Of particular concern to Taylor and his constituents is the likelihood that the Pascagoula Naval Station, home to 2500 sailors and 5000 family members, will be on the closure list.

“There’s a lot of hand-writing on the wall,” Taylor said, including a decline in recent years in the number of ships home ported there. Once a base is on the list, Taylor said, “it’s almost impossible to turn it around.”

When a base is to close, Taylor said, a retiree migration begins.

“About half of all our nation’s [two million] military retirees chose to retire near a base so they could use the hospital, the commissary, the golf course and recreational opportunities that are there. When the base closes, everything closes....and you have really devastated their lives.”

TRICARE for Life will cushion the blow for older retirees, he conceded. But most retirees and many others living in BRAC areas still will lose a lot.

New BRAC Commission Chairman Anthony Principi didn’t shy away from such perceptions at a May 3 inaugural hearing on Capitol Hill.

“The ripples of the proposals” to be announced this month, Principi said, “will be tsunamis in the communities they hit.”

Los Angeles Times  
May 8, 2005

**Allied City, Base Fear Ax**

***The bond between Los Alamitos and its Joint Forces Training Base transcends business. But it could all end if the Pentagon shuts the facility.***

By Kimi Yoshino, Times Staff Writer

Inside a windowless building, soldiers crouch in simulated combat, firing M-16s and launching grenades at a distant enemy. Outside, Blackhawk helicopters await deployment to Iraq and Afghanistan. Weekend warriors train to battle urban terrorists. Air Force One sometimes lands on the airfield, which is bigger than John Wayne Airport. And an emergency command post is prepped for any nightmare, stocked with disaster plans for the area from Santa Barbara to San Diego.

This isn't some far-flung desert outpost but, rather, the Joint Forces Training Base in Los Alamitos. It is a little-known hub of both military and community activity, where the military co-exists with little leaguers, Olympic hopefuls and scientists fighting an agricultural war by incubating and releasing sterile medflies.

It is one of dozens of military bases in California and around the country that may end up on a Pentagon list of recommended closures on May 16.

"Nobody's safe," said Army Col. Greg Peck, Los Alamitos base commander. "Everybody's looked at."

That is enough to give pause to residents and city officials, who earlier this year lobbied for the facility before a California committee studying the bases. Base boosters say that, over the years, it has become woven into their day-to-day lives.

Communities surrounding other bases may make similar arguments, given the military's role in stoking local economies. But in Los Alamitos, the relationship transcends business.

On the Fourth of July, for example, the base stages a fireworks show, with flyovers and parachutists. For 25 years, it has hosted an annual 10K run.

"It's one of those things that's been in our community for so long, it's like the trees that are there and you take them for granted," said Councilwoman Marilyn M. Poe, a lifelong Los Alamitos resident.

"Until they're cut down. Then you miss it."

Los Alamitos is easy to miss — a 4.3-square mile blip on the edge of Orange and Los Angeles counties, between the San Diego and San Gabriel River freeways.

For those who don't live there, it's a city that's easy to forget. Nearly half of the small town is covered by the base. The area's best-known feature — the Los Alamitos Race Course — is actually in Cypress.

But the town's schools give Los Alamitos bragging rights — several have been rated as California Distinguished Schools and National Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence.

Homes within the Los Alamitos Unified School District can fetch \$50,000 more than those in neighboring districts, said real estate agent Marty Eisenberg.

In March, the median home price was \$734,000, according to DataQuick, a La Jolla-based real estate research firm.

Mark Wagner, the city's recreation and community services director, likes to think people also move to Los Alamitos — and stay there — because of local programs, many of which are located at the base.

In the early 1940s, the base built an Olympic-size pool to train pilots in ocean survival skills, Wagner said.

In 1996, it was renovated; in 1998, it became the national training center for the United States water polo team.

Local swim classes are also offered.

"To have Olympians training and living in our city is something we take a great deal of pride in," Wagner said.

"Kids actually have the opportunity to mix with the Olympic athletes — to swim in the same pool they swim in. That gives me goose bumps just talking about it."

The base also hosts a youth gymnastics program in its gymnasium.

On any given day, the base is home to 850 personnel. On some weekends, the base swells with 3,500 military reservists and National Guard members.

Beyond the military presence, a handful of state agencies fill out the base's tenants, including the California Department of Agriculture's Cooperative Medfly Project, along with the private Columbia College and Carlson Wagonlit Travel Agency.

"We are a military base, yet we still remain strong in our community," Peck said. "We are very unique in that."

Still, the Pentagon will weigh the base on its military merits, Peck said.

And in its favor, he said, the Los Alamitos base is in the largest metropolitan area in the United States.

"It's real estate. It's location, location, location," Peck said, noting that the airfield is next to the Seal Beach Naval Weapons Station and two major airports.

It is the only major airfield in Southern California, he said, with the ability to store hundreds of military aircraft with two runways — the shortest is longer than John Wayne Airport's — and more than 1 million square feet of parking space.

"We can land and park any military or civilian aircraft with the exception of the B1 bomber," he said.

As a training site, the base is also known for its simulators.

An Abrams tank and Bradley fighting vehicle simulator pair is one of only four of its kind in the United States, said retired Sgt. Maj. Dave Garcia, the base's training officer.

Another simulator provides marksmanship and combat scenario training on weaponry from machine guns to grenade launchers.

"We have the ability to simulate every weapon that the U.S. Army has," Peck said.

"We feel strongly about the base — about having the best capabilities."

Miami Herald  
May 8, 2005

### **Closed Base A New Core For Growth**

*When Cecil Field Naval Air Station closed, Jacksonville expected to suffer economic harm. Instead, the newly available land has spurred welcome growth.*

By Ron Word, Associated Press

JACKSONVILLE - The screams of Navy F/A-18 Hornets picking up speed for takeoff have been replaced by corporate jets, including one flown by actor John Travolta.

The bunkers once housing nuclear weapons have been bulldozed. Gleaming new equestrian and community centers have risen among the palmettos.

The Boeing Co., Flightstar Aircraft Services, the Navy Depot, the Department of Homeland Security, Florida Community College at Jacksonville and the Florida National Guard now occupy hangars which were once the home of the Navy planes. More hangars are being built at what is now a municipal airport.

Six years after the Navy closed Cecil Field Naval Air Station, the base on the far west side of Jacksonville is a hub of economic development, conservation and recreation. Private businesses, the military and local government have stepped in to fill the void left by the Navy.

The Base Realignment and Closure Commission, which had ordered the base closed in 1993, this year will recommend further targets. With the armed forces pumping \$44 billion into Florida's economy each year, the third largest industry behind tourism and agriculture, communities that thrive on such business are anxious.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld must release his recommendations by May 16 on which bases to close. A commission appointed by President Bush then will have less than four months to make recommendations. In September, the list will be presented to Congress, which must vote it up or down without change.

Despite concerns about the potential blow to the economy, Cecil Field demonstrates that losing a base could help a community in the long run.

### **Valuable gift**

The gloom predicted by Jacksonville city officials, for example, did not occur when the jet base closed in September 1999. The 19,664-acre facility is now viewed as a valuable gift by those working to redevelop the base.

"We thank the Navy for what they gave us," said Bob Simpson, director of general aviation for the Jacksonville Airport Authority. "We have exceeded our expectations."

All eight hangars abandoned by the Navy are leased, and another two are under construction, including one for Embraer, a Brazilian aircraft company, which along with Lockheed Martin, plans to build a spy plane for the Army and Navy.

During the announcement of that \$879 million contract and groundbreaking for the new hangar, Gov. Jeb Bush called Cecil "one of the finest jewels in the economic development world."

A key element is the four military runways, including a 12,500-foot runway which is the second longest in the state. When the Navy was here, that runway was an emergency landing site for the Space Shuttle.

During Super Bowl XXXIX, about 400 business jets crowded the airport, about 18 miles west of downtown Jacksonville.

### **Movies, no factory**

Actor John Travolta filmed Basic here and is currently making another movie, Lonely Hearts. A Cecil warehouse has been converted into the set representing notorious Sing Sing prison. When filming here, Travolta often flies into Cecil from his home near Ocala.

If there is any disappointment here, it is that the city has been unable to land some huge manufacturing plants on the 1,800 acres set aside for development just south of Interstate 10, said Andy Eckert, chief of Cecil Commerce Center development. The city had been in the running for a Daimler-Chrysler plant, but it went to Savannah, Ga.

Eckert said the city wants jobs that pay more than the state average of \$37,000 a year.

The city has built a new equestrian center and community center with a pool and it continues to operate the Navy's golf course and fitness center, but has nixed plans for a national cemetery, a race car track, commercial distribution centers, and a 5,000-bed prison.

The six years it took the Navy to close the huge base gave the city time to come up with a plan on how best to recoup the \$400 million a year economic impact from the loss of the base's 7,300 workers military and civilian jobs. About 1,600 people now work at Cecil. "I don't know the economic impact that has been brought back," Eckert said.

The airport has been making money since the third year, Simpson said.

Detroit Free Press  
May 7, 2005

### **Armed Forces In Southeast Michigan**

#### ***Selfridge Base Land Is Worth Millions, But Its Military Value Is What's Crucial***

By John Masson, Free Press Staff Writer

With its ongoing upgrades, its location on an international border, and its unusual status as a facility that serves all five branches of the military, it's no wonder some experts think Selfridge Air National Guard Base will survive the current round of Pentagon base closures.

On Friday, workers at the base near Mt. Clemens were swarming around a construction site, building a \$9.6-million joint medical training facility. Near the front gate, earthmoving gear sat on the future site of a \$4-million welcome center, and a \$9.7-million joint security service training facility is set for construction on the base as well.

It doesn't have the look of a military backwater.

State and local officials have been working hard to keep Selfridge off a list of facilities that will be closed in the latest Base Realignment and Closure process. Under BRAC rules, the Defense Department has until May 16 to publish a list of military facilities -- about one in 10 -- that it wants to shutter. But analysts think the list may come out as early as Tuesday.

"I'm cautiously optimistic that we're going to be OK," said U.S. Rep. Candice Miller, a Harrison Township Republican starting her third year in Congress. The base is in her district, and her husband, Macomb County Circuit Judge Donald Miller, is its former commander. "In the last several years, there's been more money spent at Selfridge than in many, many years."

Even if Selfridge does fall to the BRAC ax, the local economy might not be as badly damaged in the long run as some fear.

Almost no one wants to talk about it, but one doesn't have to be a resort developer to see the potential in roughly 3,000 acres with frontage on Lake St. Clair's Anchor Bay -- a parcel that includes a marina, an 18-hole golf course, housing, lots of existing infrastructure and easy freeway access.

"It's important real estate, yes," acknowledged Scott MacFarlane, Miller's press secretary. "But nothing has the value of Selfridge. That's why, if this hasn't been the congresswoman's top priority, it's been among them."

Years ago, when she was Harrison Township supervisor, Miller touted the base property, which makes up a big chunk of the township, as "the most prime piece of real estate in the state" when county officials were floating a proposal to build a joint military-commercial airstrip in northern Macomb County.

"Eighteen years ago wasn't nearly the situation we have now," MacFarlane said. "The military presence in Michigan was far, far more in 1988, and the BRAC process in years past has closed down a lot of the bases that were here in 1988. ... There's no underestimating the value of that property, considering the location, but nothing -- no piece, no stitch of that property is valuable enough to warrant shutting down that base."

Local officials know the land is valuable, too. But there are too many unanswered questions to speculate about what would happen if the Defense Department pulled the plug.

And in Michigan's tough economic climate, no one wants to see a single local job evaporate. Nearly 5,000 people work at Selfridge, according to the Macomb County Community Action Committee, which has been lobbying to save the base. That includes 329 active duty military members, about 1,300 civilian employees, and close to 3,300 military reservists. The base houses 39 aircraft, including fighter jets, cargo planes, aerial refueling tankers, Army National Guard helicopters, and Coast Guard rescue helicopters.

But arguing against job loss won't count for much with the nine-member Base Realignment and Closure Commission. The Pentagon's published BRAC criteria give much more weight to military value than economic pain from a base closing.

So that has been the focus of Miller and state and local officials.

Recent upgrades at Selfridge, some of which had been in the pipeline for years, include runway improvements, a new control tower, eight new KC135 aerial tankers, and a new Michigan Army National Guard unit of CH47 Chinook helicopters that was deployed to Iraq before it even had a chance to establish itself in its new home.

Macomb County Commissioner Bob Gibson, whose district includes the base, said he feels the same way.

"Selfridge is critical to the region," Gibson said. "It's not only strategic for defense in the war on terror ... with being so close to Canada, our busiest border, it's essential ... being nestled right in between Port Huron and Detroit."

But Gibson also recognizes that the land has value of its own, even without the base.

"It's my understanding that the property itself is worth around \$120 million," Gibson said. "That includes everything, but obviously it's very valuable land."

It's also land that, like parts of the nearby Metro Beach, doesn't show up on Harrison Township's tax rolls, Gibson said.

"There's beautiful land out there, beautiful waterfront," said Harrison Township Supervisor Anthony Forlini. "But still, our first priority is to keep it as an armed forces base."

Questions about environmental cleanup and how any reuse of the base would work make it hard for local leaders to address any possible future without the base.

"I think if something like that were to happen, we would have to take a very aggressive approach to all this raw land, and how to do it right," Forlini said.

And if it does close?

"We look at the cards we're dealt," Forlini said. "And we make the best of it."

St. Louis Post-Dispatch  
May 6, 2005

### **Illinois Spends Millions Trying To Save Bases; Missouri Tab Is Zero**

By Philip Dine, Post-Dispatch Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON - With the base-closing process looming, a dizzying array of old military hands, political insiders, lawyers and public relations specialists have been hired to help save military bases in Illinois - and maybe even expand them.

The process of deciding which military and naval bases around the country to close or consolidate is designed to be shielded from outside pressure, but lobbyists and consultants are playing a large - and lucrative - role.

Though some experts question how much influence they exert, most agree that in a close call, lobbyists can make the difference between a base closing or staying open by making sure its case is made to senior officials or by checking to make sure mistakes weren't made in ranking bases.

The cost for making Illinois case: At least \$3 million - before expenses.

Chief among the concerns of local officials and civic leaders in the Metro East area is Scott Air Force Base, which could be targeted for closure when the Pentagon releases its list of recommendations next week. Historically, most of those recommendations have gone into effect.



Not all states share Illinois' aggressive approach. Missouri, for example, is spending no money on consultants to protect its bases.

"The risk of spending taxpayer dollars to pay lobbyists on a venture that could or could not pay off is not prudent in our budget situation," said Jessica Robinson, a spokeswoman for Missouri Gov. Matt Blunt. "It turns out it's a better risk to let the process go forward, because there's no guarantee with the lobbyists."

In addition, she said, the base-closing process was set up to be "a politically isolated process, so that political influence would not be the motivating factor in base placement and location."

That doesn't mean that Missouri officials haven't been speaking with the state's congressional delegation about protecting Fort Leonard Wood or Whiteman Air Force Base - but what it does reflect, military analysts agree, is confidence on the part of Missouri that its bases are not threatened.

If a base survives the Pentagon's scrutiny, consultants look for ways to argue to the base-closing commission that the base should take on new missions in the realignment part of the process - a hope in Missouri and perhaps at Scott. But that's not done too loudly because it would, one expert says, be seen as "predatory."

Leading the push for Scott is 20th Century Alliance, a firm founded by Jim Owsley, a former base-closing commission chief of staff. His partners are his old boss, former Sen. Alan Dixon, D-Ill., a law partner in the St. Louis firm of Bryan Cave who chaired the base-closing commission; and retired Air Force Gen. Ron Fogelman, who was commander at Scott before being named Air Force chief of staff, the service's top military job, during the last base-closing round.

Since hiring Owsley shortly after Scott narrowly survived the 1995 base-closing process, the Leadership Council Southwestern Illinois, which is a public/private economic development corporation representing Madison and St. Clair counties, has paid his firm about \$170,000 a year - \$1.5 million total - to help save Scott.

"We make no bones about it," says Jim Pennekamp, the council's executive director. "We've got over \$2 billion a year sitting over there in economic impact. You want to have people who can provide access, you want people who have knowledge of the process and you want people with expertise."

The consultants, or lobbyists, analyze a base's weaknesses and strengths or help state officials get appointments with senior Pentagon officials, galvanize community support or make sure defense officials properly apply the criteria in evaluating a given base.

Having been on both sides of efforts to influence base decisions, Dixon says that knowing which official to talk to and being able to make that happen are critical.

About a year ago, Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich hired Fleishman-Hillard International Communications in St. Louis to work on behalf of Scott. The team leader at Fleishman is David LaValle, a former legislative aide to the late Rep. Bill Emerson, R-Mo., and to his wife and successor and Rep. Jo Ann Emerson, R-Mo. LaValle was involved in the 1995 base-closing process.

Philadelphia Inquirer  
May 9, 2005

### **Military Bases Eye Friday The 13th**

***A Pentagon list of possible closures is due this week. Some leaders say area sites may be able to dodge cuts.***

By Edward Colimore, Inquirer Staff Writer

Thousands of jobs and millions of dollars in investment hang in the balance this week as New Jersey's seven military bases wait to find out whether they've been targeted for closure.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld is expected to make the announcement at 8:30 a.m. Friday before sending the list to Congress and the President.

Ninety-seven bases were closed in the last four rounds of the Pentagon's BRAC (base realignment and closure) process. New Jersey bases were affected by each round.

But some state leaders are cautiously optimistic, saying the installations seem better-positioned to dodge the cuts this time.

Fort Dix and the adjoining McGuire Air Force Base and Lakehurst Naval Air Engineering Station have built a unique relationship over the last several years that may help save them.

Rumsfeld and the Pentagon had pushed for more interservice cooperation - and that led U.S. Rep. Jim Saxton (R., N.J.) to help the bases transform into "a one-of-a-kind, joint-service installation."

Saxton, who holds the fourth-highest-ranking position on the Armed Services Committee, said Dix, McGuire and Lakehurst are a model for future military bases. They have been engaged in 17 joint projects in recent years.

"I don't believe in superstitions about Friday the 13th," Saxton said of the coming announcement. "However, I do believe in the tremendous military value of the only Army-Navy-Air Force joint installation.

"We have spent ten years making McGuire Air Force Base a premier air mobility base with over \$500 million in new infrastructure and even new planes.

"We've spent years improving Fort Dix with new missions and new infrastructure and building joint cooperation with the Air Force and Navy. When the list comes out, we will take stock of our best options."

Dix, McGuire and Lakehurst have more than 17,000 jobs, and 5,000 military spouses and children live there. The annual impact on the economy is estimated to be more than \$2 billion.

The other New Jersey bases and military facilities that could be affected by the cuts are: Fort Monmouth in Monmouth County; the Earle Naval Weapons Station at Colts Neck in Monmouth County; the Picatinny Arsenal (Army) in Rockaway Township in Morris County, and the New Jersey National Guard 177th Fighter Wing at Pomona Township, next to Atlantic City International Airport.

Pennsylvania has 12 Defense Department facilities. Those considered to be most at risk are the Willow Grove Naval Air Station in Montgomery County and the Defense Supply Center, a 135-acre logistic campus at 700 Robbins Road in Philadelphia.

The Willow Grove complex employs 7,779 people, and the logistics center employs 5,680.

The nine BRAC commissioners involved in crafting the list of recommended closures and realignments were sworn in in Washington last week.

"Basically, we want to stay off the 'closure' list," said Saxton, who represents Dix and McGuire and also represented Lakehurst until redistricting in the 1990s. "Being on the realignment list, however, may have some positive aspects if we can receive new missions."

Acting Gov. Richard J. Codey said that New Jersey's bases have a "tremendous economic impact" and that he supports efforts to ensure the "bases remain intact." Codey said the "installations are pivotal to the success of our armed forces."

Part of the reason for New Jersey's optimism is the military's level of investment in the state's bases. Over the last 10 years, more than \$1 billion has been spent on them, including \$100 million alone on projects related to the stationing of the new C-17 cargo planes at McGuire.

Fort Dix touts a record of processing more Reserve and National Guard troops than any other base in the nation since the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. About 40,000 have been mobilized, and nearly 30,000 have been demobilized at the fort.

The fort can point to its location next to McGuire, facilitating the airlifting of troops to places around the world.

It is also close to nearly one-quarter of the Reserve and Guard troops at a time when the military is depending on them heavily.

Fort Dix was one of the casualties in the first base changes in 1988, losing the basic-training mission that had introduced tens of thousands of soldiers to the military since 1917.

But the fort's supporters in the military and Congress helped attract the Reserve and Guard, which have used the base to train as many as 15,000 troops on many weekends.

Over the coming years, McGuire and Dix are planning a multimillion-dollar housing construction project. More than 700 aging houses have to be demolished at the bases to make way for 2,400 new, renovated and converted units. A smaller housing project is also getting under way at Lakehurst.

More investment is likely to be on the way. The 2006 budget, now being considered by Congress, includes military construction appropriations totaling \$40.3 million for projects at Dix, McGuire and Lakehurst.

Fort Worth Star-Telegram  
May 7, 2005

### **Demands Of War May Keep Texas Bases Open**

***With more base closings to come, supporters are eager to show how their installations can help the U.S. fight terrorism***

By Dave Montgomery, Star-Telegram Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON - For years the Red River Army Depot in deep East Texas appeared targeted for extinction in the Pentagon's push to get rid of excess military installations.

But the new realities of the post-9-11 world and the demands of America's war on terrorism may help the 2,500-employee facility escape elimination when Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld releases the 2005 base-closing list next week.

Civilian workers in the fenced depot near Texarkana rebuild Bradley armored vehicles and Humvees, vital for U.S. forces in Iraq. Since the conflict started, over two years ago, assembly lines have run nonstop to meet wartime demand, forcing plant managers to add more than 500 jobs over the past year.

Beefing up the armor on Bradleys and Humvees has been a top priority for the military in the wake of highly publicized complaints from soldiers worried about being vulnerable to insurgent attacks.

As the nation readies for more base consolidations, residents of Texarkana and scores of other communities with military installations nationwide hope that their roles in supporting the global war on terrorism and the deployment of thousands of U.S. troops in Iraq and Afghanistan will help their fight to save their bases.

The 2005 Base Realignment and Closure process is the fifth round of base closings since 1988 and the first since 9-11. With virtually every military installation at least indirectly connected to the war effort or the U.S.-led battle against terrorism, supporters of the bases hope to convince Washington that preserving the hometown base is crucial to national security.

### **Huge impact**

Military bases are big business in Texas, with an estimated economic impact of \$77.4 billion a year, according to the Texas Military Preparedness Commission. And the state has spent or committed about \$300 million in efforts to protect its bases.

The state has 18 major bases, and several are considered vulnerable, including Naval Station Ingleside in Corpus Christi, Goodfellow Air Force Base in San Angelo, Laughlin Air Force Base in Del Rio and perhaps Red River.

"I would have said that Red River was a sure goner," said Loren Thompson, a defense analyst at the Lexington Institute in Arlington, Va. "But all the work from Iraq has confused the issue."

Supporters of Naval Air Station Fort Worth, which has dispatched 2,700 people to Iraq and Afghanistan, say they believe that their facility won't be closed and could expand through consolidations with out-of-state installations.

"We're cautiously optimistic," said Fort Worth attorney Albon Head, who leads a citywide task force to preserve the joint reserve base, which was created in 1994 after the closure of Carswell Air Force Base.

Rumsfeld is expected to release his list Friday, three days before a May 16 deadline. A nine-member commission headed by Anthony Principi, former secretary of Veterans Affairs, will spend almost four months reviewing the defense secretary's recommendations before presenting the final list of base-closure recommendations to President Bush by Sept. 8.

Mindful that previous base-closing commissions have accepted most of the Pentagon's recommendations, communities have waged intensive and in some cases costly campaigns to avoid winding up on Rumsfeld's list. But those in danger of being targeted for closure are preparing their arguments for Principi's commission.

Ingleside, home of the Navy's mine-warfare operation, is considered one of the state's most imperiled installations because of cutbacks in shipbuilding and a shrinking Navy fleet. But its boosters say the closure of Ingleside and Naval Station Pascagoula in Mississippi would leave the Gulf Coast without a Navy presence and vulnerable to potential terrorist attack from the South.

"We don't think that's smart in the post-9-11 world," said Gary Bushell, a Corpus Christi consultant who represents a task force rallying behind Ingleside and three nearby military facilities.

All four are in a petroleum-rich area with scores of refineries that Bushell says would make an inviting target for terrorists.

Bush, without mentioning a specific base, has suggested that new refineries could be built on closed military installations.

Ingleside boosters also say the naval station, with its Gulf Coast location, would be ideal to stand vigil, in conjunction with the Homeland Security Department, against a coastal incursion.

Similarly, House Majority Leader Tom DeLay, R-Sugar Land, has suggested a regional Homeland Security office for Houston's Ellington Field, a former Air Force base that, like Carswell, was converted into a joint reserve facility.

Supporters of Goodfellow say the San Angelo base is essential to the war effort because of multifaceted training programs in intelligence, Arabic, and firefighting. Many graduates of the joint firefighting school are dispatched to Iraq as first responders to the rash of explosions and road-side bombs, says Larry Meyers, a Washington consultant representing Goodfellow supporters.

In San Antonio, civic leaders are rallying behind four installations that collectively play a broad role in the Iraq war as well as the fight against terrorism.

Hundreds of casualties from Iraq are undergoing treatment at Fort Sam Houston's Brooke Army Medical Center, which includes a nationally acclaimed burn center.

At Brooks City-Base, formerly Brooks Air Force Base, lab researchers at the School of Aerospace Medicine are developing sophisticated laser technology for combat. The school also houses an advanced bioterrorism team skilled in detecting anthrax.

San Antonio's other installations are Randolph Air Force Base, a multifunction training center and home to the Air Force Personnel Center and Lackland Air Force Base, the service's basic-training facility. Lackland's Wilford Hall Medical Center also deploys medical teams of 200 to 300 to Iraq to set up and staff field hospitals.

The city, heavily dependent on the military payroll, sustained the closure of Kelly Air Force Base in 1995, but San Antonio leaders say they are optimistic about the upcoming round.

"I like my chances," said retired Gen. John Jernigan, executive director of San Antonio Military Missions and former base commander at Brooks. "If I were playing you in a poker game," he said, "I'd certainly be raising the bet."

### **'Sit and pray'**

Fort Hood in Killeen and Fort Bliss in El Paso are believed to be virtually untouchable because of their importance in the war effort and may expand as U.S. forces return from bases in Asia and Europe.

Soldiers from Fort Hood's 4th Infantry Division achieved one of the military's proudest moments in Iraq -- the capture of deposed dictator Saddam Hussein.

"Everybody was apprehensive about loss, but there's a lot of potential for gain, too," said retired Col. Bill Ehrie, former commander of Dyess Air Force Base in Abilene and chairman of the state's Military Preparedness Commission. Dyess, home of a B-1 bomber fleet, was initially considered vulnerable but is now thought to be relatively safe.

Less secure is Laughlin, a pilot-training base in Del Rio, near the Mexican border, that traditionally draws scrutiny from government base closers. "If we're not on the list, we'll just sit and pray and say, 'Thank you, Lord,' " said Garry Stehle, head of the Del Rio Military Affairs Association.

At the Red River depot, the hum of wartime activity leads Jerry Sparks, head of economic development for the Texarkana Chamber of Commerce, to profess himself "cautiously optimistic" about the facility's chances for survival.

The nearby Lone Star Ammunition Plant is also heavily involved in the war effort, producing grenades and fuses.

Sparks, however, says he is uncomfortable about tying the facilities' outlook to the "huge workload" caused by the war in Iraq. "I would not want anybody to think we're getting favorable publicity because of the war effort," he said, referring to Red River's employees. "They're doing the thing they're doing for one reason -- to support the soldiers in the field."

*Researcher Marcia Melton contributed to this report.*

Biloxi Sun Herald  
May 8, 2005

### **Depots, Arsenals Prime BRAC Targets**

#### ***Costly inefficiencies at military industrial facilities not improving***

By Eric Rosenberg, Hearst Newspapers

WASHINGTON - When Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld this week releases a list of military bases to close or trim, the Pentagon's vast network of industrial facilities may be top targets.

The Air Force, Navy, Army and Marine Corps operate one of the largest enterprises in the country, with about 72,000 civilian employees at 27 major maintenance depots, manufacturing arsenals and ammunition plants.

Of the total, the Navy employs about 35,500, the Air Force about 21,000, the Army about 14,200 and the Marine Corps about 1,300.

Some facilities are considered targets for closure because government and private studies have concluded they are a financial drag whose costs continue to spiral higher compared with private industry.

The industrial network ranges across the country, from the Portsmouth, N.H., Naval Shipyard to the Corpus Christi, Texas, Army Depot, to the Letterkenny, Pa., Army Depot to the McAlester, Okla., Army Ammunition Plant.

Michael Wojnar, a spokesman for Rep. Michael McNulty, D-N.Y., whose district includes the Army's Watervliet Arsenal, indicated he was braced for bad news.

"Our modus operandi here is that the arsenal may be closed," he said.

Cathy Travis, a spokeswoman for Rep. Solomon Ortiz, D-Texas, co-chair of a congressional caucus dedicated to protecting the military's plants, also was downbeat.

Her expectation was that "absolutely, the depots are going to be caught up in it," she said.

Political leaders are already weighing in with their concerns about particular installations. Worries over the future of the Army's Rock Island, Ill., arsenal prompted House Speaker Dennis Hastert, R-Ill., to ask for Rumsfeld's help.

"As you prepare to make your recommendations to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission," Hastert wrote last month, "please take into account the special requirement that the Rock Island Arsenal has filled during the global war on terrorism and subsequent operations in Iraq and Afghanistan."

Rock Island and other Army facilities build armor for Army vehicles.

The Pentagon list of proposed closures and consolidations may be released later this week but no later than May 16. Then, over the succeeding 3 months, a nine-member Base Realignment and Closure commission will review the list, hold hearings and visit the targeted facilities.

The commission can add or remove bases on the list before presenting President Bush with its final list by Sept. 8. The president then has until Sept. 23 to either send it back to the panel for revisions or to send it to Congress, where the lawmakers have 45 work days to vote the list down in its entirety. If that doesn't happen, the list of base closings goes into effect.

The entire process should be complete no later than early November.

Rumsfeld has stressed the need to shed installations that might have served a purpose in the Cold War but now are extraneous. The savings would be used for higher priorities, such as training and new weapons.

Although a few facilities, including Army arsenals and a handful of depots that perform weapons maintenance, have temporarily increased their workload building armor for Army vehicles going to Iraq, most installations typically work below optimal capacity at high cost to the government, according to independent studies.

For example, a 2003 study by the Government Accountability Office - the investigative arm of Congress - found work at the Army's five major maintenance depots - two in Pennsylvania, two in Texas and one in Alabama - declined 36 percent over the previous 15 years after private defense contractors competed and won maintenance contracts. The Defense Department can spend up to 50 percent of its maintenance funding on private contractors.

"Without new work, the depots cannot continue to be viable," the report said.

A GAO report last year found that Army facilities for destroying old ammunition were using only 6 percent of capacity.

Another GAO investigation last year found costs surging at Air Force aircraft depots in Utah, Oklahoma and Georgia. The Air Force facilities have been unable "to effectively identify the cause and take corrective actions, as appropriate, on (their) continuously upward spiraling material costs," the report found.

One costly inefficiency common throughout the Pentagon-funded plants is that workers tend to be trained for a single skill, unlike the trend in private industry.

"It's just amazing that (the military plants) are still hiring people for expertise in only welding," said Derek Stewart, a GAO labor analyst. "All they do is weld and if there is nothing to weld on a given day, they have nothing to do."

That's an example "of an inefficiency at a tremendous cost to taxpayers," he said, adding the problem has continued because the Pentagon has yet to devise a long-range strategy for its industrial facilities.

Concerned about rising costs, the Army commissioned an outside assessment of its manufacturing operations. The Rand Corp., a Santa Monica, Calif.-based, government-funded think tank, concluded one solution was to sell off as many installations as possible to private industry during the coming round of base closures.

The government conducted four previous base closing rounds in 1988, 1991, 1993 and 1995, which resulted in 97 major facility closures and hundreds of realignments or closures of smaller facilities.

Atlanta Journal-Constitution  
May 8, 2005  
Pg. 1

## **Base Cuts Worry State**

*Georgia hopes its good luck holds as Pentagon drafts list of facilities that may close.*

By Ron Martz

Tim Martin admits he's a bit nervous about the future of Albany.

Nervousness is a part of the job description for the president and chief executive of the Albany Chamber of Commerce. His South Georgia community has weathered industrial plant closings over the last two decades and the devastating flood of 1994.

"My palms are sweating and my breathing is shallow, but I think I'll survive this, too," Martin said.

Martin's worries are summed up in a Pentagon-created acronym: BRAC -- Base Realignment and Closure.

BRAC is a recurring effort by the Pentagon to cut costs by closing some of its excess military facilities. Later this week, for the first time in a decade, the military will offer a list of bases it wants to close or realign. A committee appointed by Congress and the president will consider the list and draw up a final version by September.



While the process is highly secretive, the Marine Corps Logistics Base in Albany has long been rumored to be in the cross hairs of Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

"There are 10 gazillion unknowns and really very few knowns," Martin said.

Retired Army Brig. Gen. Phil Browning, executive director of Gov. Sonny Perdue's Military Affairs Coordinating Committee, said the communities that are home to the 13 military installations in Georgia have been preparing for this week since the last BRAC in 1995. They include Cobb County, home of Dobbins Air Reserve Base; Atlanta, which has Fort McPherson; and Forest Park, with Fort Gillem.

"I think we're all a little nervous right now but because we've talked about it so much and been straightforward in talking to our communities out there, there's really not a lot of discussion about it," Browning said.

Not long after Congress approved the process that will lead to the 2005 round of base closings, Rumsfeld said he wanted to cut as much as 25 percent of the military infrastructure. The implication was that about 100 of the nation's 425 military facilities could be affected.

Since then, Rumsfeld has lowered his sights. Newspaper editorial writers who spoke with him on a conference call late last week said he told them that excess capacity at U.S. bases is less than estimated, and that with troops returning from soon-to-be-closed overseas bases, the figure could be less than half his earlier estimate.

Suggestions by Rumsfeld and others have also indicated this round could be more about realignment than closure. That means some facilities in a state could lose missions and troops while others could gain.

Georgia, where the military is a \$20-billion-a-year industry, could add soldiers and missions at large bases like Fort Stewart, Fort Benning and Fort Gordon. But smaller facilities, such as the Navy Supply Corps School in Athens and Fort McPherson could be closed.

Sen. Saxby Chambliss (R-Ga.), speaking to the Atlanta Press Club last week, said he believes Georgia is in good shape this time because 12 of its 13 installations -- all but the Kings Bay submarine base in Brunswick -- played some role in the war in Iraq.

"We could not have a better time to defend all of our bases than we do right now," he said. "If we can't show that now, we never will be able to show how important these bases are to the security of the United States."

The four previous rounds of base closures (1988, 1991, 1993 and 1995) shut down 97 bases across the country, but Georgia did not lose one.

### **Geography a blessing**

Although BRAC is supposed to be politically neutral, the influence of Sen. Sam Nunn (D-Ga.), who chaired the Senate Armed Services Committee until his retirement in the mid-1990s, could not be discounted. Chambliss is a member of the committee, now chaired by Virginia Republican John Warner.

With Nunn gone, some have speculated that BRAC could be gunning for Georgia. But Loren Thompson, a defense analyst with the nonprofit Lexington Institute think tank in Washington, D.C., believes the state will do well again.

"I expect Alabama, Georgia and the Carolinas will fare better than almost every other state in the base-closing process," Thompson said.

His three reasons: Bases in the Southeast tend to be of high military value, are well-suited to getting troops and equipment overseas quickly, and are in the most pro-military part of the country, where they have been steadily supported by lawmakers.

"It has nothing to do with 'blue state, red state.' It has to do with what has been put into them in the past," Thompson said.

Once the list is released, the nine-member, independent BRAC commission will assess it and the information that went into the Pentagon's decision-making process.

The commission will hold regional hearings to let community leaders have their say. While the loss of a base in any community is an economic blow, that is far down the list of what the commissioners will consider.

Military value is the primary guide for the commission, which can come up with its own supplemental list of possible closures.

But getting a base on the supplemental list will take the approval of seven members of the commission this year. In the past, when it took only a simple majority to put a base on the supplemental list, the Marine base in Albany, Fort McPherson, Fort Gillem, Robins Air Force Base in Warner Robins and Naval Air Station Atlanta in Marietta were added for comparison purposes.

In the four previous rounds, only Moody Air Force Base in Valdosta was on the original Pentagon list. But intense lobbying spared it.

The commission must send its recommendation to President Bush by Sept 8. He must forward his recommendations to Congress by Sept. 23. If the president approves the commission's recommendations, Congress must approve or reject the entire list.

If Bush does not like the commission's recommendations, the panel has until Oct. 20 to prepare a new list.

### **Ready for anything**

Georgia officials have taken a three-pronged approach to BRAC this year.

Community groups have been working with base officials to enhance the military value of their installations by attracting new missions.

In recent months, under the guidance of the state Military Affairs Coordinating Committee, each community has developed two groups. If a Georgia base is on the list, one group will study the data the Pentagon used in the decision to see if errors were made and if there's a reasonable argument to spare the base. The other group will begin planning for long-term redevelopment of the site once it reverts to the community.

"When that list comes out, they will be ready to execute," said Browning, who has overseen the development of the community groups.

In Albany, Martin believes the community will deal with whatever happens at the Marine base with the same resilience and equanimity it showed after floods and other industrial losses.

"We've grown through those, so it wasn't just a blank slate that we started out with here," he said. "We've got a lot of folks with a lot of experience and right now we are cautiously optimistic, but we are abundantly prepared for any eventuality."

## **BRAC in Georgia**

Georgia has 13 military installations. Here's how they likely stack up as the Pentagon prepares to release its Base Realignment and Closure recommendation list this week.

### **SAFE AND SECURE**

1. Fort Benning (Columbus) -- The Army's only basic training center for infantry and home to three key deployable units (3rd Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division and 3rd Battalion, as well as the 75th Ranger Regiment and 36th Engineer Group). A combat brigade from the 25th Infantry Division also is scheduled to be stationed there starting in fall 2006. Officials have told the Pentagon the base could handle some of the troops being sent home from Europe. Military population: 28,659 Civilian work force: 6,712 Annual payroll: \$1.1 billion

2. Fort Stewart (Hinesville) and 3. Hunter Army Airfield (Savannah) -- Home of the headquarters and three combat brigades of the 3rd Infantry Division and a battalion of the 75th Ranger Regiment. Also the largest Army base east of the Mississippi River that serves as a regional mobilization center for deploying National Guard and Army Reserve forces. Could expand and add troops and missions as bases close in Europe. Military population: 19,536 Civilian work force: 3,482 Annual payroll: \$698 million

4. Kings Bay Naval Base (St. Marys) -- The state's newest base, opened in 1978, is home to eight Trident ballistic missile submarines, the entire East Coast fleet. Although the subs must make a long run around Cumberland Island to reach open ocean, permanently moving them elsewhere would be cost-prohibitive. Military population: 5,027 Civilian work force: 1,831 Annual payroll: \$356 million

5. Robins Air Force Base (Warner Robins) -- The only air logistics center east of the Mississippi River. Provides maintenance and repairs for F-15 jets and C-130 and C-5 aircraft in addition to all Air Force helicopters and special operations planes. Home to the Air Force Reserve Command headquarters and the 116th Air Control Wing (J-STARS), which combines active, Reserve and National Guard members. Military population: 6,856 Civilian work force: 13,421 Annual payroll: \$1.35 billion

### **LIKELY TO SURVIVE**

6. Fort Gordon (Augusta) -- Already a joint-use facility, this Army post provides training for all services in signal intelligence in addition to being the Army's primary signal communications training site. The Eisenhower Army Medical Center is one of the major military hospitals in the Southeast and has been handling some of the casualties from Iraq and Afghanistan. Has room to grow and could add some of the troops now based in Europe. Military population: 8,860 Civilian work force: 2,310 Annual payroll: \$685 million

7. Moody Air Force Base (Valdosta) -- Improved its chances for survival in recent years by adding missions and is home to the 347th Rescue Wing, which conducts combat search-and-rescue operations around the world. Also home to the 820th Security Forces Group, which provides security in hostile environments for "first-in" American forces. Also provides pilot training. Air space encroachment is not an issue in sparsely populated South Georgia. Military population: 3,715 Civilian work force: 339 Annual payroll: \$186 million

### **ON THE BUBBLE**

8. Dobbins Air Reserve Base and 9. Naval Air Station Atlanta (Marietta) -- Although it is a classic joint-use facility (Army and Air National Guard, Army and Air Force Reserve and Navy and Marine Corps Reserve units operate there), it is located in the midst of densely populated south Cobb County and encroachment from surrounding neighborhoods is an issue. The fact that Lockheed Martin is also on site, building C-130

and F/A-22 Raptor aircraft, could help keep the base open if the Bush administration decides to continue funding those programs. On the other hand, proposed cutbacks to those programs could spell the facility's end. Military population: 3,484 Civilian work force: 395 (not including Lockheed Martin) Annual payroll: \$115 million

10. Fort Gillem (Forest Park) -- The primary tenant is First Army headquarters, which is responsible for the mobilization and training of all Army Reserve and National Guard units east of the Mississippi. It also houses the Army's only criminal investigation laboratory, the regional distribution center for Army and Air Force exchanges and the Military Entrance Processing Station. All those functions could be moved to other facilities and the real estate returned to the community for development. Or, the base could retain most of its functions and be turned over to the Georgia National Guard, which then could move out of its cramped headquarters on Confederate Avenue in Atlanta. Military population (includes Fort McPherson): 6,133 Civilian work force (includes Fort McPherson): 4,952 Annual payroll (includes Fort McPherson): \$512 million

11. Fort McPherson (Atlanta) -- A prime piece of real estate in southwest Atlanta, with MARTA stops at either end and a golf course in the middle. It houses three major headquarters, but they could easily be moved elsewhere. The Third Army headquarters, which answers to U.S. Central Command, could quickly be folded into that headquarters at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa. Forces Command, which answers to Northern Command, could become part of its operations at Peterson Air Force Base in Colorado. It could also go to a larger Army installation east of the Mississippi or Joint Forces Command headquarters in Norfolk, Va. The activities of Army Reserve Command headquarters could be moved to the Pentagon or another base in the Washington, D.C., area. Atlanta was a prime spot for those headquarters because of easy access to Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport, but that likely will not be a factor in any decision to close the base or retain it.

## **CLOSURE CANDIDATES**

12. Navy Supply Corps School (Athens) -- A small installation where 4,000 students train every year in loading ships. But those students have to travel long distances to see the ships they will be working with when they graduate. The school, which also trains foreign supply officers and is the headquarters for the Navy's service support, could easily be moved to another larger Navy facility. Because it occupies prime Athens real estate, finding a new use for the site would pose few problems. Military population: 130 Civilian work force: 193 Annual payroll: \$8.7 million

13. Marine Corps Logistics Base (Albany) -- One of two Marine logistics bases in the United States -- the other is in Barstow, Calif. -- and the only one east of the Mississippi River. It does maintenance work for all services, both active and National Guard, and is headquarters for Marine Corps Logistics Command. But its location in southwest Georgia, far from the ocean and any Marine combat units, works against it. The base also controls the Blount Island maintenance facility in Jacksonville and some of its functions could be moved there. The big Marine base at Camp Lejeune, N.C., could absorb the rest, saving time and money for the service. Military population: 673 Civilian work force: 2,313 Annual payroll: \$149 million.

*Staff writer Bill Steiden and The Associated Press contributed to this article.*

**Editorial**  
Los Angeles Times  
May 9, 2005

## **Wolfish Eyes On L.A. Air Base**

In one week, the Pentagon will publish a base closure hit list that will cause a great deal of economic pain for many Californians. No matter that the state lost more bases (29) and more jobs (93,000) than any other during four previous rounds of base closings. California still has much to lose because it remains home to 30 major military bases, dozens of smaller installations and 279,000 of the military's uniformed and civilian employees.

Politicians around the country are drooling at the prospect of winning the military and civilian jobs that California will shed as local bases are shuttered. And nothing could be more appetizing than the economic bonanza hidden away in the nondescript Los Angeles Air Force Base in El Segundo.

The base, which looks like an office complex, doesn't have fighter jets booming overhead or unexploded ordnance buried underneath. What it has is authority over \$60 billion in high-tech defense contracts and 4,500 civilian and military employees who work on next-generation, space-based radar and communications systems, along with high-tech ballistic missiles, rockets and satellites. It is being eyed hungrily by such politicians as Sen. Pete V. Domenici (R-N.M.). He wants the Pentagon to transfer the base's jobs to Kirtland Air Force Base, which, not surprisingly, sits in his backyard.

California's typically fractious congressional delegation and Sacramento have pledged to fight for the state's bases once the Pentagon list is made public. The best way to do that is by presenting a united front should the Los Angeles air base show up on it. The loss of any base in the state would hurt, but not as much as the loss of this one. In addition to base employees, the operation spins off 50,000 additional jobs in Los Angeles County and 62,000 more around the state. Its annual statewide economic impact is estimated at \$16 billion.

Base closure decisions shouldn't be dictated by what's best for a given state's economy. If that were the criterion, nary a base would be shuttered. But the very economic footprint created by the Los Angeles Air Force Base underscores why it — and its jobs — should stay put.

It made military and economic sense to close a Marine Corps base in Tustin and pack the crews and helicopters off to a similarly equipped base in San Diego County. But it's another thing to endanger the development of future high-tech weapon systems by disregarding the accumulated scientific and engineering expertise that has grown up over five decades to support the Los Angeles Air Force Base.

Reasonable estimates suggest that 80% of senior civilian personnel at the base (who outnumber their military counterparts) won't move if their jobs are transferred. Logic dictates that the same would be true for thousands of rocket scientists, engineers and support staff at aerospace and research companies that ring the installation.

Moving the base's operations to another state would cost the military years to reassemble the scientific and technical expertise that elects to stay behind.

#### **Editorial**

Christian Science Monitor  
May 9, 2005

#### **Military Bases, Dismissed**

The Defense Department wants to create a leaner, more agile fighting force capable of dealing with more diffuse global threats. That obviously involves shuttering the remnants of the Pentagon's old-style approach

to the relatively fixed military problems of the cold war. Simply put, that means closing more military bases around the country. Announcements to that end - the first in a decade - could be made as early as this week.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld reported figures last year that showed that even with the previous rounds of base closings that began in 1988, the military still had an excess base capacity in the US of some 24 percent. That could mean closing an additional 100 of the military's 425 major bases.

However, Mr. Rumsfeld has since suggested that the excess base capacity is now thought to be about half of the original estimate, as some 70,000 troops and 100,000 of their dependents slated to move stateside from Europe and Asia will need a place to go.

Still, the number of closings on Rumsfeld's list could be significant, although they can be easily justified: Since the end of the cold war, the number of armed forces personnel has dropped by about 40 percent, while the number of bases has dropped by just 20 percent.

Unfortunately, protecting bases from the Pentagon's ax remains a white-hot political issue, with members of Congress anxious about losing their jobs if bases in their home states or districts close. And a copious amount of lobbying money has been spent by cities and states to help forestall or prevent such closings. However, that kind of lobbying, and the fear behind it, reflects a short-sighted vision.

Constituents and lawmakers who feel that shutting bases will hurt more than help ought to focus on the revenue-generating possibilities for bases that have outlived their current usefulness.

Cities, states, and Congress can take note of a recent Government Accountability Office report that showed communities, even though slow to recover, had regained some 85 percent of the civilian jobs lost in the previous rounds of base closings.

Many closed bases have been successfully redeveloped for residential or commercial use. Others have been converted to wildlife sanctuaries. President Bush himself recently suggested one of the many potential uses for a closed base: building new petroleum refineries.

But perhaps the biggest base closings bonus: an estimated \$29 billion in taxpayer savings from 1988 through 2003, and \$7 billion a year since then, according to the GAO report.

Community recovery following a base closing obviously isn't quick, or easy. But for both the military and communities, thoughtful strategies can be well worth the effort in the longer term.

Portland Press Herald (ME)  
May 9, 2005

**Base closing would hit wide, last long - History has shown that losses due to base closings are significant, and Maine has two that are at risk.**

By Edward D. Murphy

The numbers associated with the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard are staggering.

A civilian payroll of \$318.3 million annually. Nearly 5,000 workers. Direct purchases of nearly \$6 million in Maine and New Hampshire and another \$46.4 million in contracted services each year.

Equally staggering is the potential economic impact if the shipyard or Brunswick Naval Air Station is closed in the last round of military **base** closings. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld is expected to release his list of recommended closings next week and concern is high that the Kittery shipyard, in particular, will be included.

If the shipyard is closed, it could be years before all the employees who end up out of work find new jobs. And it's almost a certainty that any new jobs the employees find won't carry the same wages or benefit package as they have now.

"Obviously, it would be a very big blow because those jobs are at the very highest of wage scales," said Laurie Lachance, a former state economist who is now president of the Maine Development Foundation. "The likelihood of them being at the same pay or with the same benefits package . . . is slim, at best. It would be very difficult to absorb those folks."

The average pay for shipyard employees is about \$65,000, according to an economic impact study of the potential loss of the shipyard released last month by the New Hampshire Economic and Labor Market Information Bureau. The report noted that many of those employees have either highly developed skills or a high level of education, raising the possibility of the loss "of valuable human capital" if they were to leave the state to take jobs elsewhere.

The only mildly positive spin to put on the shipyard's closing, if it does happen, is that southern Maine has the state's most vibrant economy. It has an economic diversity that the rest of the state can't match, employers who offer higher wages and better benefits, and the state's lowest unemployment rates.

But such a dramatic closing would leave even a robust economy reeling.

"With the number of jobs there and the average salary, those (jobs) could be extremely hard to replace," said Paul Schumacher, executive director of the Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission. "And the ripple effects would be fairly vast."

Schumacher notes that dozens of businesses and hundreds of workers outside the shipyard gates are as dependent on the **base** as those who actually work on Seavey Island, where the yard is located.

"How far down do those impacts go?" he said. "That's a concern. There's no question that there would be a significant economic impact in this region and it would take years to recover."

The New Hampshire economic study backs that up.

It points out that two out of five shipyard workers live in New Hampshire. If the facility is closed, the study estimated the loss of 1,219 jobs that are dependent on the shipyard, a reduction of \$133 million in the state's output of goods and services in the first year after closing, and a loss of population of nearly 4,000 even more than a decade after the shipyard is shuttered.

With the **base** actually located in Maine and more Mainers among the work force, the effect here would be even greater.

The study noted that, for all the stories about successful redevelopment of former military **bases** - and there are some cases where the closings turned out better for local economies in the long run - recovering the lost jobs remains difficult.



The Long Beach Naval Shipyard in California was closed in the 1995 round of closings at the cost of 4,487 jobs, the report said, and only 200 jobs have been regained since.

A series of Navy facilities in Charleston, S.C., was closed in 1996 and 6,000 jobs were lost. The report said only half of those have been recovered.

However, John Dorr, director of Labor Market Information Services for the Maine Department of Labor, says there are some industries that would be looking for the kind of skills that shipyard employees possess.

He notes that boat builders in the state are doing well, as are some manufacturers who use composite materials. Both industries could use skilled manufacturing employees.

"It's a new kind of manufacturing and new materials that's emerging in the state of Maine that maybe five years ago, we didn't think was possible," Dorr said.

Any job gains, however, would be on a small scale compared to the number lost.

"It's not an employer with 6,000 employees, but it's someone with 60 or 100 employees," so the shift from the shipyard to the private sector would be subtle, he said.

"It's going to be three jobs here, 20 jobs there, 16 jobs there," Dorr said. "There are many smaller employers out there that would be welcoming those kinds of skill sets. Those jobs are out there."

A big challenge would be matching workers who lose shipyard jobs with the openings, Dorr says. In some cases, retraining would be needed because a major enterprise like the shipyard requires workers to specialize, while smaller companies favor generalists who can take on a variety of tasks.

Dorr says there's no way to sugarcoat the impact of the lost jobs, with their high wages and good benefits, if the shipyard closes. But workers might have more options than they think, he adds.

"On the whole, I think it's going to be a tougher row to hoe for everybody, but the story isn't as bleak as it's sometimes told, of people becoming hamburger flippers," Dorr said. "There's a more interesting and diverse path that people travel."

Portland Press Herald (ME)  
May 9, 2005

### **Towns taking different tack with grants - Brunswick completes its study Kittery focuses on the fight to stay open.**

By Dennis Hoey and Jen Fish

Brunswick and Kittery are taking different approaches with a grant to fund a study of what to do if the naval **bases** in each town are closed.

Brunswick has completed its preparedness strategy report, which lists steps the town should take if the Brunswick Naval Air Station were to make it onto the Department of Defense's **closure** list. Kittery officials are focusing on the fight to keep the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard open, and will worry about the study once they know if their **base** is on the list.



Kittery's report won't be available until this summer. But Brunswick's study recommends formation, almost immediately, of a redevelopment authority to begin the process of developing a re-use plan for BNAS. Brunswick officials say their report doesn't mean they won't continue to support the efforts of a citizen task force that is fighting to keep the **base** open.

"We are not trying to pull the rug out from under the task force," said Brunswick Assistant Town Manager Patricia Harrington. "We don't want to give the message that we want to redevelop the **base**. We will fight tooth and nail and we will not give up in our fight to keep the **base** open."

Brunswick and Kittery applied for advance planning grants offered by the Department of Defense. Brunswick received a \$158,000 grant, while Kittery got \$175,000. The Department of Defense plans to close or consolidate a number of **bases**. The **Base Realignment and Closure** Commission will send a list to President Bush by Sept. 8.

Harrington acknowledges it would have been irresponsible of the town if it had not taken steps to prepare for a **base closure**. But she also wants the community to recognize the efforts of the task force, which has spent more than two years, without pay, lobbying behind the scenes on behalf of BNAS.

Unlike some states, which hired professional consultants to represent the interests of their military **bases**, Brunswick has relied on volunteers.

"It has been a labor of love," said Rick Tetrev, a task force member who once served as BNAS's executive officer. "I believe in this **base**, its importance to Maine and to our national security."

Kittery Town Manager Jonathan Carter says local officials have used part of the grant money to be educated about the BRAC process, and are currently working on the other two phases of the grant: taking an inventory of the shipyard's buildings and infrastructure, and conducting a region-wide economic diversification study.

Carter says he expects information from those two phases to be presented later this summer.

"Our number one task right now is to keep the shipyard open," Carter said.

Ann Grinnell, chairwoman of the Kittery Town Council, says future plans for the shipyard if it is closed is not something advocates are thinking about.

"When the list does come out, and God forbid we're on it, we have until Sept. 8 to fight to get it off the list," she said. "We're putting all our energies and efforts into keeping that **base** open."

RKG Associates of Durham, N.H., developed Brunswick's report. It describes the impact that closing the **base** of 4,428 military personal and 722 civilian employees would have on Brunswick and neighboring communities.

The report says the area could lose up to 2,000 military tenants or homeowners who currently live off **base**. The sudden increase in vacancy rates will likely lower rents and possibly home rates. The market might not rebound for five to 10 years, the report estimates.

The report also says that the availability of a fully operational airport with two, 8,000-foot-long runways could provide an opportunity for airfreight and passenger connections. However, the report also points out there is not currently a need for another commercial airport in the state.

The report identifies several communities which successfully redeveloped military installations that were closed as a result of the BRAC process.

Among them: Pease Air Force **Base** in Newington, N.H., which closed in 1991.

The report says Pease International Tradeport, which used to be Pease Air Force **Base**, with more than 5,000 jobs is one of the most successful economic development projects in New England. It is now a bustling office park.

For the shipyard, the Pease comparison does not hold up, says a former Portsmouth Naval Shipyard commander. Capt. William McDonough, spokesman for the Seacoast Shipyard Association - the group that was formed to protect the shipyard - says it would be difficult for the shipyard, with its mostly civilian force of 5,110 workers, to duplicate the success of Pease Air Force **Base**.

"You can't compare the two," McDonough said.

Pease was mostly staffed by military personnel, who were simply transferred when the **base** closed. In contrast, of the shipyard's employees, only about 5 percent are military staffers. About 400 civilian jobs were lost when Pease closed.

Furthermore, McDonough says, Pease was more adaptable to change than the shipyard.

"What Pease had was geography - they had acres and acres of space," he said.

In comparison, the shipyard covers only about 279 acres, and most of the island is occupied by older, historical buildings and several massive dry docks.

"The facilities that are (in the shipyard) are geared toward heavy metal construction-type work," McDonough said. "If the shipyard closes, some of the waterfront property may be used . . . but it won't represent 5,000 jobs."

Craig Seymour, a principal at RKG Associates, says one of the first steps for Brunswick to take - if it makes the **closure** list - would be formation of a local redevelopment committee. The redevelopment authority, which would be formed if the air station was closed, would take about one year to develop a zoning and reuse plan for BNAS.

Seymour also has some advice for Brunswick:

"Don't panic. There is an opportunity for success in redevelopment of the **base**," he said. "It's a good piece of property. There is something for everyone there."

Maine Sunday Telegram (Portland, ME)  
May 8, 2005

### **Two workplaces, thousands of voices - Those connected to the air station and shipyard offer views on the bases and impacts if they close.**

By Seth Harkness

In the big picture, it is what they contribute to national security that will determine whether Maine's two military **bases** appear on the Pentagon's list of domestic **bases** scheduled for **closure**, expected to be released later this week.

On another level, however, the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard and Brunswick Naval Air Station are more than components in a much larger military apparatus. They are places where thousands of people arrive each day and go to work. Like most workplaces, each **base** has its own culture shaped by its mission, location, the people employed there and other forces.

BNAS, for instance, is an inherently transient place, where thousands of members of the military rotate through on three-year stints. A smaller staff of civilians provides a core of continuity and support while the squadrons of sailors and their P-3 aircraft are deployed around the globe.

At Portsmouth, the nation's oldest government-owned shipyard, it is not uncommon to find people who followed their parents and grandparents into the workforce. Both the shipyard and those who work there tend to take the long view, with the yard investing in its new employees through four-year apprenticeships and the employees often remaining in southern Maine their entire working lives.

The unique character of these workplaces cannot be fully understood by speaking with a handful of people familiar with them, but it can be glimpsed, as shown by the following interviews.

Winston-Salem Journal (NC)  
May 8, 2005

#### **N.C. HAS GONE FULL FORCE TO KEEP ITS MILITARY BASES - RECONFIGURATIONS OR CLOSURES WOULD BLAST HOLES IN THE ECONOMY**

By Mary M. Shaffrey

The Defense Department's process of deciding which military **bases** get closed or reconfigured was designed to keep politics out.

That is not to say that politicians - in North Carolina and elsewhere - haven't done everything they can to keep their home-state **bases** off the list.

**Base realignment** and **closure** - or BRAC, as the process is known - is the Pentagon's plan for tightening its own belt. Under federal law, the list of **bases** affected by BRAC must be in the Federal Register by May 16, but most observers believe that the formal announcement will come this week, perhaps as early as Tuesday.

"We have dotted our i's and crossed our t's," said U.S. Sen. Elizabeth Dole, R-N.C. The state, as well as the congressional delegation, has "done its homework" to ensure that none of the eight military establishments in North Carolina is closed, said Dole, a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

Lt. Gov. Beverly Perdue, who is in charge of the state's efforts to keep military **bases** from moving away, agreed.

"North Carolina has done everything it can do to BRAC-proof the state," said Perdue, a Democrat. "From here on it's in the hands of God."

Politics will play "a very little role in this," said Christopher Hellman, a senior analyst with the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation, a policy organization in Washington that follows military affairs.

And despite all their work, this is exactly the way politicians want it, said Lilly Goren, the author of *The Politics of **Base** Closings: Not In My District*. Before BRAC was established in the 1980s, Congress had the decision-making power to close **bases**. No one wanted to see a home **base** closed, so the process was tedious and ineffective, she said.

"A lot of folks in Congress were happy to get this off their backs because then they could escape the blame," Goren said.

North Carolina's eight military installations escaped inclusion on the list in four previous rounds of **base** closings - in 1988, 1991, 1993 and 1995.

The Pentagon began the latest round of evaluation two years ago at the behest of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. The Pentagon had said that it had 20 to 25 percent more U.S. **base** capacity than it needed. But on Thursday, Rumsfeld said that the surplus of space was not nearly that large. The Pentagon is expected to release its recommendations to the BRAC commission this week, no later than Thursday.

The nine-member commission, led by former Secretary of Veterans Affairs Anthony Principi, includes former Congressional members, cabinet secretaries and retired military personnel.

It has until early September to review the recommendations. In order for a **base** to be removed from the list, five of the nine members must vote to remove it. If the commission wants to add a **base** that was not recommended, seven of the nine members must support it.

This list will then be sent to President Bush, who can accept or reject the entire list, but cannot tinker with it. No president has ever rejected a BRAC commission recommendation.

Bush is the only elected official with the power to keep a **base** open. But North Carolina leaders - from senators to local city managers - have been actively involved in making sure the state puts forward the best foot.

Hellman suggested that this is done as much for the home-state officials' benefit as for the **bases** themselves.

"No civic leader wants to be perceived as not having done absolutely everything they could do. Even if that means going through the motions that you know aren't going to make that big of a difference," he said.

North Carolina's military installations are all in the east, but have a total economic impact of \$18 billion on the entire state, according to a 2004 study conducted by East Carolina University. Camp Lejeune in Jacksonville contributes the most, with \$5.2 billion. Seymour Johnson Air Force **Base** in Goldsboro has the smallest contribution, \$800 million.

"I think there is a greater recognition now than there was in the '90s of just how much these **bases** affect all of North Carolina, and not just our area," said Joe Huffman, the city manager of Goldsboro.

Goren said that during the BRAC process it is essential to demonstrate the statewide impact of military **bases**.

"That is essentially the case that needs to be made," she said. "You need to make that clear, that the entire state needs to hold on to the **bases**."

U.S. Rep. Mike McIntyre, D-7th, said that economic factors were not the only things that have helped change people's minds.

"Unfortunately, it took 9/11 to wake up a lot of people," said McIntyre, a member of the House Armed Services Committee. "Other than those (elected officials) who served on Armed Services, it was not a high priority," he said.

The communities surrounding these **bases** have rallied behind them, setting up Web sites, distributing fliers and lobbying anyone who would listen. They have poured millions of dollars into their communities so that the Department of Defense will see them as military-friendly places.

The state has also passed laws intended to make the lives of military families easier. Among other things, it eliminated the requirement that children take North Carolina history in school, offered in-state tuition rates to military personnel and family members, and made it easier for military spouses to get jobs.

Local governments have also strengthened zoning laws around **bases** to prevent further encroachment of residential and commercial areas. The Pentagon has said that encroachment is one of the factors that it is considering in the evaluation of **bases**.

North Carolina also hired an independent consultant, Leigh McNairy, to help advise the process.

"This BRAC will be data driven," said McNairy, referring to specific instructions from Rumsfeld on how the process is to be determined. "And if the data calls the shots on this evaluation, then we should do well."

The data the Pentagon will be evaluating includes how useful the **base** is, what special missions it houses, its community interactions and its potential for growth as part of **realignment**. North Carolina leaders believe that the **base-realignment** process could even help the state expand its military presence, not just preserve the status quo.

Members of the state delegation said as much to Phil Grone, Rumsfeld's lead man on BRAC, when they met with him in Washington earlier this year, Perdue said.

"We argued forcefully to Mr. Grone that North Carolina is a model for the transformed military of the 21st century.

"We pointed out that North Carolina is prepared to accept new missions and expand our role in the nation's defense," said Perdue, who has traveled regularly to Washington as part of her role leading the state's efforts.

This is music to the ears of local business leaders, who have been pushing the idea for years.

"This is a much different song than we would have heard three or four years ago, but I don't care," said Bruce Gombar, the director of economic development for Onslow County.

But North Carolina also has to be cautious with its message that its military **bases** have room to grow.

"**Realignment** is going to play a much bigger role this time around than it has in the past," Hellman said. "For the same reason you make the argument you can accommodate more, you don't want to protest too loudly that you have extra space."

Washington Post  
May 10, 2005  
Pg. 1

## **Defense Jobs In N.Va. At Risk**

### ***Many Buildings Fall Short of New Security Standards***

By Spencer S. Hsu, Washington Post Staff Writer

The Defense Department will have to move as many as 50,000 employees out of Northern Virginia office buildings if it strictly enforces new security regulations, and local lawmakers say Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld could announce some of those relocations this week.

Rumsfeld is to release a list of planned military base closings and realignments by Friday. Although Pentagon officials have declined to provide details, Rumsfeld said last week that the department wants to move workers from leased office space to buildings it owns to cut long-term costs.

The department would have to begin moving those jobs anyway because of anti-terrorism regulations it adopted two years ago, which require, among other things, that buildings not on military bases be set back at least 82 feet from traffic to protect against truck bombs.

The new standards, already in effect for new construction, become mandatory in October for new leases and will be phased in for all lease renewals starting in 2009.

The Pentagon rents about 8 million square feet of space in 140 Northern Virginia buildings -- and almost none of them can meet the new requirement, according to analysts and lawmakers.

Although just how the Pentagon will implement the rules is uncertain, local members of Congress say they fear that tens of thousands of defense jobs will leave Arlington County and other densely populated parts of Northern Virginia over the next five to 15 years, moving to military bases or commercial sites outside the Capital Beltway -- or elsewhere in the country -- where land is cheaper.

The District and Maryland have fewer Defense Department leases but could also be affected.

"I think the [base realignment] process is about to drop an economic bombshell on Northern Virginia. It's probably the greatest threat to our economy since the real estate recession of the late 1980s," Rep. James P. Moran Jr. (D-Va.), who represents Arlington, home to about 60 percent of the leased Defense space in the region, said in an interview.

"I don't want to cause people to panic, but I suspect very strongly that . . . its target is going to be DOD-leased space, particularly leased space within proximity of the Pentagon," Moran said.

In addition to the economic impact on such jurisdictions as Arlington, land-use experts say the security regulations could increase suburban sprawl and frustrate "smart growth" efforts in urban areas.

Moran has asked Rumsfeld to ease the setback rule, and a spokesman for John W. Warner (R-Va.), chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, said he, too, supports a more flexible standard as long as it does not sacrifice safety.

Besides the minimum setback requirement, the new Pentagon rules call for buildings to be more collapse-resistant; to eliminate uncontrolled below-ground or rooftop parking; and to have protective window glazing, mailroom ventilation and emergency shutoff switches for air distribution.

"The Department of Defense does not have an interest in going back into Fort Apache. But we do have an interest in protecting our people," said Ralph E. Newton, who heads the branch of the Pentagon that manages its leased space in the capital region.

Several real estate analysts cautioned that lack of funding might limit how quickly the Pentagon can move to more secure buildings and that it is likely to apply the new standards to its most sensitive facilities first.

They also said the relocations might not seriously hurt the region as a whole, as inner jurisdictions' losses would be offset by outer suburbs' gains.

For instance, the Fort Belvoir Engineering Proving Ground, a former military airfield in southeastern Fairfax County, has been touted by developers as a site that could accommodate up to 20 million square feet of office space, although it has environmental and traffic problems.

Newton said it is unlikely that all 50,000 defense workers in leased space would be moved outside the region.

"I think until we test the standards and see what the market will bear, it is impossible for us determine what the impact will be," he said.

But Washington area planners and real estate experts say the new Defense Department rules are part of a wider trend toward fortification of government offices that has forced them to alter their thinking.

Intense demand for homeland security and military-related office space has caused rents to soar near the National Security Agency at Fort Meade and the Patuxent River Naval Air Station in Southern Maryland, each at least 20 miles from Washington, for example.

Robert M. Pinkard, chief executive of Cassidy & Pinkard, the area's largest locally owned commercial real estate firm, said he has never before seen a time when the private lease market is so driven by the federal government's decisions on location.

Closer to the capital, Arlington planners are discussing whether to seal off street traffic around individual building, or perhaps even several blocks of Crystal City or Ballston, to try to keep their defense jobs, although that could run counter to the county's history of "urban village" planning.

In Southeast Washington, District leaders are revising plans to redevelop 300 acres around St. Elizabeths Hospital into a residential and commercial center, now that the U.S. government wants to use its portion of the property for a secure compound for federal agencies.

In Prince George's County, planners are worried that their dream of redeveloping a "town center" across from the 226-acre Suitland Federal Center will be limited because federal agencies have retreated behind fences and buffer zones, said Teri Bond, project manager with the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

"We have had a sea change . . . in the way security is perceived for federal employees and people within federal buildings, and I don't believe it will ever go back to the way it was before," said Joseph D. Delogu, principal and partner with Spalding & Slye Colliers, a real estate firm that helped the Transportation Security Administration choose its new headquarters.

At the same time, some anti-terrorism specialists have criticized the federal government for not adopting uniform standards. For non-defense agencies, the Department of Homeland Security and the General Services Administration finalized less restrictive rules in February. They require setbacks of 20 to 100 feet

for new buildings only, and they allow exceptions if an agency can reach an overall level of security "performance."

Some agencies, such as the Justice and State departments, have stronger requirements.

"We don't want to say if you don't have 19 1/2 feet of setback you're out of consideration," said Wade D. Belcher, who chaired the working group that produced the standards and is with the Office of the Chief Architect at GSA.

"We will not be bullied by domestic or international persons who want to do harm or disrupt the government. And if we abandon an area, it can be perceived that the potential adversaries have won."

*Staff writer Dana Hedgpeth contributed to this report.*

Philadelphia Inquirer  
May 10, 2005

### **U.S. Set To Slash Bases In Europe**

*Savings made when troops are brought home will go into stateside bases, an official said.*

By Robert Burns, Associated Press

WASHINGTON - The planned withdrawal of tens of thousands of U.S. troops from Europe would reduce by nearly one-half the number of bases maintained by the Army in Europe, a senior Defense Department official said yesterday.

Ray DuBois, the acting undersecretary of the Army, told a Pentagon news conference that savings gained from abandoning those bases will be reinvested in new facilities for soldiers at U.S. bases.

DuBois said the Army has calculated exactly which brigades and other units are to move back to the United States "by quarter, by fiscal year," and has proposed to Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld which U.S. bases they would be moved to. DuBois declined to disclose more details, saying Rumsfeld was "still chewing over" some of the recommendations.

DuBois said Rumsfeld would publicly announce his full set of recommendations on closing and realigning U.S. bases at 10:30 a.m. Friday. The recommendations will be submitted to an independent commission that will hold hearings, starting with Rumsfeld's testimony Monday.

The commission has until Sept. 8 to submit its final report to President Bush. It is the first base closing and realignment commission since 1995; that process was so politically charged that for several years afterward Congress refused Pentagon efforts to initiate another round of closures.

The Pentagon had said it was wasting taxpayer money by maintaining about 20 percent to 25 percent more base capacity than it needed, although Rumsfeld last week said the surplus may actually be only half that amount. His comments suggested the base closings will not be as severe as once feared in communities that rely heavily on the economic benefit of local bases.

Officials in Pennsylvania and New Jersey have been working for months to defend their installations. In Pennsylvania, there are 12 military facilities, with 60,000 military and civilian employees and an estimated



annual economic impact of \$1.5 billion, including payroll and other spending. In New Jersey, three major bases generate 17,000 jobs and an annual economic impact estimated to be \$2 billion.

Wall Street Journal (WSJ.com)  
May 9, 2005

### **Puerto Rico Governor Opposes Shutdown Of US Army Base**

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP)--Puerto Rico's governor Monday urged against the possible shutdown of Fort Buchanan, the last active U.S. Army base on the U.S. Caribbean island.

Fort Buchanan, located in suburban Guaynabo, is the only active U.S. Army post in the Caribbean. As early as this week, U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld is expected to submit a list of military bases he believes should be closed or reorganized for economic and logistical reasons. One likely candidate is Fort Buchanan.

"The fort is open, and I'm going to keep on struggling to keep it open," Gov. Anibal Acevedo Vila said.

Acevedo Vila, whose Popular Democratic Party wants to increase the autonomy of the island of 4 million residents, was elected in November in a close race against Pedro Rossello, whose party wants Puerto Rico to become the 51st U.S. state. Both parties oppose the shutdown of the base, which would have a serious impact on the economy.

"It's a blow, every time links in the union (between Puerto Rico and the United States) are eliminated," said Luis Fortuno, the island's nonvoting representative in the U.S. Congress.

The administration of U.S. President George W. Bush might close the fort in reprisal for how the Navy base in Vieques Island was closed, he said.

The Navy left its base on Vieques, off Puerto Rico's east coast, in 2003. Four years earlier, errant bombs killed a civilian guard during bombing exercises. The death sparked protests by opponents who contended the bombing harmed the environment and health of Vieques residents.

Guantanamo Bay Naval Station in Cuba became the last U.S. naval base in the Caribbean after Roosevelt Roads in Puerto Rico was shut down last year. Roosevelt Roads had been a support base for U.S. invasions of the Dominican Republic in 1965, Grenada in 1983, and Haiti in 1994. Thousands of troops and civilians packed up and left, depriving the economy of an estimated \$300 million a year.

Established in 1923, Fort Buchanan mobilizes, readies and deploys some 15,000 National Guard and U.S. Army Reserve soldiers in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. More than 450 buildings dot its 4,500 acres. At the end of last year, about 630 people were employed on the base, which was the headquarters for U.S. Army South from 1999 to 2003.

Fort Buchanan first appeared on the list of bases whose closure was contemplated in 1995.

Congress set up the closure and realignment process in 1988. A special commission, working with the Department of Defense, recommends potential candidates. The commission then holds regional hearings and visits the installations.

Bush will announce his decision on the recommendations in September. Congress then votes to approve or disapprove the entire list. If Congress does not disapprove, the list becomes law. More than 350 U.S. military bases have been closed since 1988.

Dallas Morning News  
May 9, 2005

#### **4 Texas Bases May Be Under Ax**

##### ***Rumsfeld may submit plan for latest round of closures this week***

By G. Robert Hillman, The Dallas Morning News

WASHINGTON – Buckle up. The Pentagon is launching a new round of military base closings that could sweep through Texas like a dark spring storm.

Facing a May 16 deadline, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld is expected to announce by week's end the Pentagon's plan to trim its "excess capacity" by closing, cutting or otherwise realigning military facilities throughout the country.

In Texas, at least four major military installations are on the line: the Red River Army Depot outside Texarkana, Goodfellow Air Force Base near San Angelo, Brooks City-Base in San Antonio and Naval Station Ingleside near Corpus Christi.

The Pentagon's list will go first to a newly seated, nine-member commission for review and revision over the next four months, then on to President Bush and, eventually, to Congress.

It's the fifth round in a base-closing process designed to skirt the inevitable political cry in Congress: Don't mess with the military bases in my district, in my state. They're essential to the economy.

It's an emotional, political endeavor involving a wide swath of America that hosts the military.

Even as the commission was organizing last week, its meeting room on Capitol Hill was crammed with lobbyists, civic leaders and reporters – all sizing up chairman Anthony Principi, the former veterans affairs secretary, and his eight fellow commissioners.

"We will be the face," Mr. Principi said afterward, having already predicted bluntly the process would rip through some communities like a tsunami.

"The words 'closure' and 'realignment' are easy to write on paper," he said at the start of the meeting, "but they do have profound effects on communities and the people who bring those communities to life."

Possibly affecting the Texas decisions are the thousands of U.S. ground troops from Europe and other places around the world that are returning to Fort Hood, outside Killeen, and Fort Bliss, near El Paso.

So, the base watchers note, it's possible the Lone Star State, long a magnet for the military, could take some hits and still gain personnel. At best, that scenario is a fallback position. Those communities with military bases facing the chopping block are going all out to stave off closure.

"Don't even say that word," said Lucy Reta, fielding a base closing inquiry at the Corpus Christi Chamber of Commerce.

Nearly 4,000 military and civilian personnel are based at Ingleside, and its closure would be a gut-wrenching blow to the region. It would be no better in any of the other communities under the Pentagon's ax.

"We're busy fighting," said Chris Paulitz, a spokesman for Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison, R-Texas, who's been rallying support for Texas bases. The state's other Republican senator, John Cornyn, is also on watch, along with other members of the state's congressional delegation facing military cuts.

In Austin, Gov. Rick Perry has mounted a save-the-bases campaign as well, in part to compete with similar, entrenched campaigns in other states.

In this round, the Pentagon is as eager to streamline its military facilities as it is to shutter some of them. In the military transformation that Mr. Rumsfeld has embarked on to better respond to the hotspots in the international war against terrorism, the watchwords are consolidation, realignment, cross-service use – and full use.

At the Red River Army Depot, community officials are hopeful that the stepped-up armoring of military vehicles for Iraq will be enough for the Pentagon to give that depot a pass.

"We're cautiously optimistic," said Jerry Sparks, who's working the issue for the Texarkana Chamber of Commerce. "Our goal is not to get on the list in the first place."

It's even possible that Red River could grow, he added. "We have plenty of land and plenty of water and no encroachment issues."

In Corpus Christi, where the nearby Ingleside base for navy mine hunters and minesweepers is viewed as one of the state's most vulnerable installations, some folks are already looking at the possibility of increasing operations at Naval Air Station Kingsville, perhaps by transferring more pilot training there from a similar base in Meridian, Miss.

"That would be awesome for South Texas," said Gene Guernsey, a Corpus Christi real estate broker who's been fighting to save Ingleside. "We'll see what comes out."

Houston Chronicle  
May 10, 2005

### **Ellington's Usefulness Stressed By DeLay**

*He suggests a homeland security office for the base*

By Ruth Rendon

Congressman Tom DeLay toured Ellington Field on Monday, promising to do everything he can to secure a military presence there, including recommending the field for a regional homeland security office.

The Department of Defense's Base Realignment and Closure Commission is evaluating all U.S. military bases in the United States and abroad and is expected to release its list of recommendations by May 16.

"It's tough for anybody like me to sit and wait," said DeLay, R-Sugar Land. "You get butterflies in your stomach wondering what they are thinking about. I hope they are taking everything into consideration."

The House majority leader reiterated comments from U.S. Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, who visited Ellington Field last week, that Ellington Field is an asset to the community, region and nation.

"Texas is just too large an area to downsize its interior defense capacity especially in light of the unique homeland security responsibilities shouldered by a border state," he said.

Congress will get a final list of recommendations for closings and realignments in September. It then will vote to accept or reject the entire list.

St. Louis Post-Dispatch  
May 9, 2005  
Pg. B1

### **Scott Closing Would Cut Retiree Pool**

#### ***Veterans are among top volunteers in area***

By William Lamb, Of the Post-Dispatch

If the Pentagon targets Scott Air Force Base for closure, people such as Claude Barrow would find themselves on the endangered list, too.

Like many Air Force veterans who settled in the area after leaving the service, Barrow has busied himself with volunteer work. And Barrow, 70, is busier than most. He and his wife, Peg, deliver hot meals to the elderly. He watches children at an O'Fallon, Ill., day-care center. He also is active with the Boy Scouts and mentors a sixth-grade student at O'Fallon's Central School. And that's just the beginning.

If Scott is shut down -- the Pentagon's list of recommended base closings is expected to be made public this week -- the pool of military retirees in the area would begin to dry up.

Politicians have made much of Scott's 13,065 military and civilian jobs and the \$2 billion or so that the base pumps into the regional economy each year. But another consequence of Scott's closure would be a slow but steady erosion of well-educated Air Force retirees who sit on city councils and school boards and do all kinds of essential volunteer work.

"Obviously, folks who served in the military, particularly those who served at Scott, have grown up in a culture of service," said Jim Pennekamp, executive director of the Leadership Council Southwestern Illinois. "They served their country and they're used to volunteering and serving in the communities where they live. They're very good people."

If Scott closes, Pennekamp added, "over time, I think you'd see fewer of those types here. What Scott does is it brings in new people on a regular cycle, so there's a constant stream of folks coming to this area. If we go through a closure, that stream cuts off. This is something that has been noted in a number of

communities that have gone through a closure; they lost something when they no longer had that caliber of individual coming in and staying long-term."

Claude Barrow is a case in point. Barrow was raised in Buffalo, N.Y., and joined the Air Force in 1958 after graduating from the University of Buffalo. The Air Force took Barrow to Oklahoma, Nebraska, Thailand and Vietnam, dropping him at Scott from 1971 to 1974 and returning him there for good in 1976. Barrow retired in 1983 as a lieutenant colonel and chose to stay in O'Fallon, mostly because the public schools seemed a good match for his three children.

Barrow spent the next 11 years working for the Boy Scouts of America, including a stint as district executive of the Belleville-based Okaw Valley Council. When Barrow retired for good a decade ago, he and Peg began to spend much of their free time volunteering.

These days, Peg teaches CPR and first aid at the American Red Cross office in Fairview Heights and is active with the O'Fallon Women's Club. Claude works for the AARP as the Southern Illinois coordinator for its drivers safety course. Thursday nights find the Barrows at the USO office at Lambert Field, greeting troops on their way to and from Fort Leonard Wood and other military installations.

"I was in the Air Force for 27 years, almost 28," Claude Barrow said. "One of the things we learned is that when you're transferred to a new community, you jump in and get involved because it's a way to develop relationships. Air Force people and military people, they jump in and get involved because this is home for that four-year period. This is where you're going to live. This is where your kids are going to grow up, so you want to make it as good a community as possible."

Barrow and other Air Force veterans said they settled in the Metro East area in part because of its proximity to Scott, where they have access to the PX and the base hospital.

They also cited the manageable cost of living and, particularly, the quality of the public schools. And Leroy Elleby Jr. says that Air Force veterans deserve some of the credit for that, too.

Elleby, 49, of Fairview Heights, has been a member of the Pontiac-William Holiday District 105 School Board since 1999. The Marion, S.C., native also spent 11 years in the Air Force, retiring as a captain in 1989 while he was stationed at Scott. Elleby, who has lived in North Dakota, Nebraska and Alaska, said that Air Force veterans bring unique experience and an air of worldliness to school boards and other volunteer jobs.

"We bring a lot of experience," said Elleby, now an information systems technologist at Boeing. "We're well-traveled. We've had jobs that have given us the experience that the average person normally wouldn't get. Like, when I was 23 I was in charge of 10 nuclear warheads."

Elleby laughed.

"You don't get that kind of training and responsibility in a normal job," he said. "So yeah, we bring a lot to the table and that would go away, basically, if you didn't have (military) people rotating in here."

The Defense Department and the Base Realignment and Closure commission consider only a base's military value, not its impact on the local economy, when deciding which installations to close. For that reason, arguments about a potential "brain drain" from the Metro East area, where most of the Air Force veterans live, are not likely to influence the process.

Still, Pennekamp and others say that the loss of Air Force veterans would have a very real impact on the local economy.

"Remember, Scott Air Force Base is an information technology center," Pennekamp said. "These are people who are highly skilled."

Keith Sawyer, 68, is a national director of the Air Force Association, an organization of active duty, reserve and retired Air Force personnel. Sawyer, of O'Fallon, Ill., predicted that the Metro East area would rebound from Scott's closure faster than expected. An end to the influx of new Air Force retirees would be little more than a hiccup on the way to recovery, he said.

"I'm sure you'll have a slump for a while," said Sawyer, whose three decades with the Air Force included 386 combat missions over Vietnam. "But most of the people that are coming here (to the Metro East area) are not military. They're coming here from the other side of the river. I think the potential for this area is still great with or without Scott.

"But we'd certainly rather have it," he said.

Long Island Newsday  
May 9, 2005

#### **NY Awaits Base Closure List**

##### ***LI and upstate sites are endangered as Pentagon prepares recommendations on cuts and restructuring***

By Associated Press

WASHINGTON - Bracing for a bureaucratic storm that's been brewing for 10 years, New York officials are anxiously awaiting word this week on which military bases will be targeted for closure by Pentagon cost-cutters.

The process known as BRAC - Base Realignment and Closure - will take a major step forward when the Pentagon releases its list of proposed bases for closure or restructuring.

The list will be officially published May 16 but officials are expected to make it public late this week. Given the intense interest and anxiety, word may leak out before then.

"I'm sitting on pins and needles like every other member that has a military base in their district. These are long days," said Rep. Thomas Reynolds (R-Clarence), whose district includes the Niagara Falls Air National Guard Base.

"It is a waiting game now, because the community and the government have done everything they can do," he said.

Part of New York's nervousness stems from hard losses in the last BRAC round in the mid-1990s. Two Air Force bases, one in Plattsburgh and one in Rome, were shuttered, though military lab work and other services continue in Rome.

This time around, officials also have to worry about the state's Guard bases, including the 106th Air Rescue Wing based in Westhampton. Nationally, such bases are expected to be consolidated.

Gov. George Pataki came to Washington recently to personally lobby Anthony Principi, the head of the BRAC commission that will receive the Pentagon's recommendations and make changes. The commission will submit its own list in September for review by President George W. Bush.

Pataki said the state has spent millions to protect the bases.

That money has paid for local leaders to travel to Washington to argue the national security necessity of their bases, for improvements around bases to make them more cost-effective, and for lobbyists.

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld offered an encouraging signal Thursday, telling newspaper editors that earlier estimates calling for a 25 percent cut in military infrastructure were too high. That has BRAC experts predicting this round will see fewer outright closures and more shifting of work between facilities.

Residents around Fort Drum in northern New York spent past BRAC rounds worrying they would lose their base. The jitters peaked when it was mentioned as a possible victim on the television show "The West Wing." But the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have suddenly made Drum, the home of the 10th Mountain Division, increasingly important.

Even with that newfound sense of security, Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), took the fictional TV plot so seriously she dashed off a letter lobbying the show's fictional characters. The BRAC results could become a test of her influence as a relatively new member of the Senate Armed Services Committee and possibly an issue in her 2006 re-election campaign.

Newport News Daily Press  
May 9, 2005  
Pg. 1

### **Closing Bases Opens Door To Redevelopment**

*Many communities have had success converting former military facilities to civilian uses. But politics and pollution sometimes slow the process.*

By Terry Scanlon

A bayfront resort. Pricey waterfront condos. A museum. An expanded Buckroe Beach. A new office complex.

Some of those ideas have been floated as contingency plans if Fort Monroe closes, and based on the work at former military bases throughout the country, all are possible.

Whether a base has a runway, a drydock, historic homes or even a stone fort, communities have found ways to capitalize on the land. But almost every community also had common problems to overcome -- pollution and politics.

Developers who have converted former bases say the keys to success are fairly basic but difficult to achieve.

Start planning right away, involve the public as much as possible and leave the details to professionals. Politicians tend to cause more problems than they solve when they get involved in making decisions, said Tim Ford, executive director of the National Association of Installation Developers, a group that helps communities redevelop former bases.

"It's a real-estate activity," Ford said. "It doesn't have to be political, and it shouldn't be political, but politicians have got themselves wrapped up into this a lot."

Miki Schneider, the director of planning for the group that's heading redevelopment at Fort McClellan in Anniston, Ala., the Joint Powers Authority, said the key to success is having engineers and lawyers who understand the military and the Base Realignment and Closure process.

"When I took this job, I had been a planner for 16 years. I've done redevelopment," Schneider said. "But base closure's such a different animal. There's no book, just a world of acronyms a mile and a half long."

While bickering among political leaders has halted redevelopment at some former bases, most have seen major changes.

At Cecil Field Naval Air Station in Jacksonville, Fla., private airplane mechanics work out of the hangers that used to house the fighter jets now based at Oceana Naval Air Station in Virginia Beach.

In Charleston, S.C., a marine cargo company now employs thousands of people at the docks abandoned by the Navy.

At Fort Harrison in Lawrence, Ind., officers' quarters have been converted into stately homes.

And in New York, an old stone fort that used to protect the harbor, Fort Totten, has been converted into a museum.

However, the military has had a habit of leaving behind a few problems. Old buildings in disrepair are one. Pollution, particularly unexploded ordnance, is another.

At the former Fort McClellan, a college and a couple of federal agencies have filled vacant buildings. But clearing the land of explosives has proved to be a slow, expensive process.

The Army had at least 60 firing ranges on the 19,000-acre base, which had been used for artillery training since the Spanish-American War.

The base was tucked into the foothills of the Choccolocco Mountains, which could serve as a backstop. The Army doesn't know the precise location of all the rounds that have been fired.

It doesn't know for sure where all the problems are on the base.

An area that was supposed to be clear of any explosives, at least according to Army records, turned up three grenades on the surface after a search of the property earlier this year.

"Often it's not the military withholding information," said Ford. "Often it's just that they don't know."

That could be the case at Fort Monroe, where the extent of pollution remains unclear.

Monroe also poses other challenges. It has less than 100 acres that could be developed, the moat limits access to the middle of the base, and historical guidelines could further complicate redevelopment.

Hampton officials insist that they're focused exclusively on expanding Fort Monroe during the upcoming Base Realignment and Closure process, but at least one retired general has said he's seen contingency plans that include new office buildings and a quiet waterfront resort.



The plan suggested rental homes like those in the Outer Banks and opening the border between the Monroe and its neighbor to the north, Buckroe Beach.

History shows the political effects of redevelopment. In Anniston and Lawrence, residents later voted out the mayors who were in office when the base closed amid criticism of the redevelopment.

"It's going to get dirty. It's going to get political. It's not going to be an easy process," Ford said. "The people who have been through this know that."

In Lawrence, Don and Judy Tidwell have spent six years restoring a home on the old parade field at Fort Benjamin Harrison. They've enjoyed the meticulous work -- scraping paint, injecting foam insulation in the walls and rubbing the new mantle until it looks worn -- as well as the bigger projects like replacing the windows and stripping the floors.

But as much pride as they have in their home, they rave even more about their neighbors. Almost without exception, they said, everyone in the neighborhood welcomes the protection that the historic regulations give the neighborhood, and residents work together like no place else they've seen before.

"It's the best place we've ever lived," Judy Tidwell said. "The people out here are warm, sincere and friendly."

But the Tidwells are unhappy about how the redevelopment has been run. Like others, they complain that the former mayor steered all of the profits to a handful of developers who have been slow to get things done and, in particular, failed to establish clear renovation guidelines for homeowners.

"We love our neighbors and we love this house," Don Tidwell said, "but if we had it all to do over again we wouldn't buy one of these houses because of all the political stuff."

### **The commission members**

ANTHONY J. PRINCIPI, commission chairman and former secretary of Veterans Affairs for President Bush.

JAMES H. BILBRAY, a former Nevada congressman who served on the House committees on foreign affairs, armed services and intelligence. Served in the Army Reserve from 1955 to 1963.

PHILIP COYLE, a Californian and a former assistant secretary of defense, is a senior adviser to the Center for Defense Information.

HAROLD W. GEHMAN JR., a retired Navy admiral who lives in Virginia Beach. Served more than 35 years in the Navy concluding as NATO's supreme allied commander, Atlantic, and as commander of U.S. Joint Forces Command.

JAMES V. HANSEN, a former congressman from Utah who served on the House Armed Services Committee. Served in the Navy from 1951 to 1955.

JAMES T. HILL, a retired Army general who lives in Florida.

CLAUDE M. KICKLIGHTER, a retired Army lieutenant general and a former assistant secretary for policy and planning at the Veterans Affairs Department.

SAMUEL KNOX SKINNER, lives in Illinois, former chief of staff to President George H.W. Bush. He served in the Army Reserve from 1960 to 1968.

SUE ELLEN TURNER, a retired Air Force Brigadier General from Texas.

Colorado Springs Gazette  
May 9, 2005  
Pg. 1

## **Local Bases Don't Expect To Be Targets For Closure**

### ***Pentagon proposals are due out in days***

By Pam Zubeck, The Gazette

Communities across the country are bracing for what could be devastating or exhilarating news this week when the Pentagon is expected to unveil its recommendations for which military bases should close.

Colorado Springs' four Air Force installations and one Army post appear safe, because of development in the past decade and their missions.

In fact, the local facilities could grow because of cutbacks elsewhere.

The Pentagon had hoped to trim 24 percent of its domestic base square footage — about 100 of the nation's 425 bases.

Defense Secretary Rumsfeld said last week that the cuts would be less than half the original goal. Reasons include a need to accommodate up to 70,000 troops being relocated from bases in Asia and Europe, and the government's desire to move some defense workers from leased to governmentowned space.

But some experts say the Pentagon will still submit a hefty list to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission.

BRAC, which usually agrees with most of the Pentagon's recommendations, must submit its list to President Bush by Sept. 8.

"There is plenty of pressure on the budget, and base closings are an important way to reduce operating costs," said Barry Blechman, head of Washington think tank DFI International and a member of the Defense Policy Board that advises the defense secretary.

"If you look at the test ranges, labs, administrative headquarters and possibility of consolidating reserve facilities, there's probably going to be a substantial proposal from the department," Blechman said.

Loren Thompson, a military analyst with the Lexington Institute in Arlington, Va., agreed. "That will mean many thousands of jobs going away or going other places," she said.

Since 1988, the process has shelved 352 major and minor bases and installations, with savings approaching \$30 billion, which doesn't include the cost of environmental cleanup. The last round of closures was in 1995.

Colorado has lost three bases: Pueblo Army Depot in 1988, except the mustard gas stockpiles, Lowry Air Force Base in Denver in 1991 and Fitzsimmons Army Medical Center in Aurora in 1995.

The latest round, aimed at freeing money for weapons systems and the creation of a more agile force, could mean growth for Colorado Springs area bases.

“There’s a widespread belief within the Pentagon that Colorado Springs is likely to be a gainer rather than a loser,” Thompson said.

Fort Carson, the largest area installation, appears protected from closure and poised for growth. Rumors have circulated for months that Carson could be the destination of a division relocating from Europe.

In the past decade, its railyard got a \$40 million face-lift after it was noted as a weakness during the last closure round. The improvements are crucial, because a weak rail link would slow deployment.

Carson is a test site for privately built and maintained military housing, the first of its size in the military, and recently got hundreds of new units. Plans call for spending \$26 million more on barracks.

In June 1999, the post became home to the 7th Infantry Division, which puts active duty commanders in charge of 12,000 National Guard troops in three other states. As the armed forces rely more heavily on guard and reserve troops, such training facilities become crucial.

More recently, Carson was designated as the base for more than 3,600 soldiers in the 2nd Brigade Combat Team. Deployed to Iraq from South Korea last year, the unit will return here this summer.

And the post boasts 237,000-acre Piñon Canyon Maneuver Site, near Rocky Ford, second in size only to the Army’s National Training Center in the southeastern California desert. It would be difficult to replace.

As for the Air Force, Peterson Air Force Base, home to Air Force Space Command, has been considered as a possible home for the Los Angeles Air Force Base Space and Missile Center, identified by experts as a prime closure target.

A \$200,000 study funded by local and state authorities concluded that Peterson would be well-suited to house the center, which could bring 8,000 jobs.

A military insider, however, said word at the Pentagon is that the center will stay in Los Angeles.

Peterson is uniquely situated to fend off closure because it hosts the newest unified command, U.S. Northern Command, which opened in 2002 and is in charge of homeland defense. The base also includes the North American Aerospace Defense Command, which also operates from Cheyenne Mountain Air Force Station.

NORAD and NorthCom are in the middle of a \$50 million construction upgrade, including installation of a top-security communications systems.

Schriever Air Force Base, part of Space Command, is critical to operating the nation’s satellite constellations.

“Every base in Colorado we have remaining is very important and pertinent to today’s military mission, whether Army or Air Force,” said Sen. Wayne Allard, R-Colo.

Christopher Hellman, military policy analyst with the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation in Washington, D.C., predicts a clamoring when the list comes out.

“Communities that have bases on that list will throw everything at the commission” to get off the list, he said.

Past commissions, though, have followed the Pentagon’s lead 80 percent of the time, he said.

Albuquerque Tribune  
May 9, 2005  
Pg. 1

### **BRAC: Bases In The Balance**

#### **Customer Base**

*Economic impact is on hearts, minds of Kirtland area businesses but near the bottom of the Pentagon's criteria for closures*

By Tamara N. Shope

While some rally and some shout, there are many who are praying.

Christ United Methodist Church is four blocks west of Kirtland Air Force Base, and the possibility of a total base closure hits close to home in pocket and spirit.

Donna Hestwood is the praying kind.

She's the financial secretary for the church and knows all too well the financial burden it would bear should the city lose the base entirely.

The Pentagon, in its efforts to streamline the military and the budget, is to announce this week a list of bases it suggests for closure or realignment.

The Defense Department has said all bases are being looked at, and scenarios include total closure, unit relocation and unit gain.

Kirtland houses much more than the military, including Sandia National Laboratories, and a laser and military space research center. About 24,000 people work on the base nearly 6,000 active-duty military or citizen soldiers.

About one-third of the members at Christ United, 6200 Gibson Blvd. S.E., go to work every day behind Kirtland's fences, Hestwood estimates.

That's a lot of dollars in tithes and offerings, Hestwood says. Not to mention the number of souls to soothe if the worst-case-scenario a total base closure should come to pass.

"It would be a serious blow to our church," she says. "And not just us. The whole city: The restaurants would be a big one, the gas station, the Goodyear Tire Center that just moved here, the housing market."

Area restaurant owners say they aren't quite bracing for the worst, but they are nervous.

Pete Rallis, owner of Copper Canyon Cafe, 5455 Gibson Blvd. S.E., says a total base closure would be devastating but even losing only the military would hurt.

"Thirty to 40 percent of our business is from Kirtland," he says. "I don't think I could stay in this area."

He says aside from walk-in customers, his business does a lot of on-base catering.

"I came to this area because of Kirtland," he says. "But when I signed my lease, I signed a three-year, so if I needed to pack up and leave I could."

"When we came here, it was just after 9/11, and when the base was on 'orange,' on high-alert, it would really hurt business. That alone told me how important it (the base) was."

### **The paradox**

The base-closure item on the minds and hearts of Albuquerque people economic vitality is near the bottom of the priority list in Washington, D.C., according to the Defense Department.

The economic impact on communities ranks No. 6 on the list of eight matters the Pentagon is to consider in closing or realigning a base.

And that's the way it should be, said Christopher Hellman, the military budget and policy analyst for the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation.

"A lot of communities spend a lot of time and energy developing economic impact studies, saying 'If you close this facility it's going to be a disaster for us,' " he says. "(But) the federal government is no happier about causing angst to a community than anybody else. But they are interested in how the base fits into their core mission. They get very tunnel-visioned when it comes to those types of issues."

He says the government's priority is to determine how a base fits into our national security strategy.

"They have to be dispassionate about it. At the end of the day, they've got to be able to justify their decision on paper and in public," he says.

Admittedly, Hellman who has been studying BRAC for a decade knows little about Kirtland's situation.

"You know, I can't offer specifics on Kirkland's chances of staying open," he says, the mispronunciation a sign the base is not at the forefront of some experts' minds. "But I can tell you what is happening in other communities."

"The government is and should be dispassionate in the process, but not in helping communities rebuild. The Pentagon hears it, but I'm not sure they are listening to it."

### **A passionate community**

Where the federal government is without prejudice, Kirtland's neighbors are not.

One of its biggest proponents, the Kirtland Partnership Committee, estimates the base brought \$3.4 billion and nearly 28,000 jobs to the city.

For the community that came into existence because of the base, the numbers are very real.

One of Kirtland's neighbors is Holy Ghost Church, 833 Arizona St. S.E.

The Rev. Thomas Mayefski says his church stands to lose tithes, membership and support for the parish's school. But one of his main concerns is for the property values in the area.

"The people we serve would be affected, and therefore the city as well," he says. "If the home values drop, the wrong kind of people could move in there."

Crime, he says, could skyrocket, which would harm an area full of children.

For Roberta Finley, who founded Cervantes Restaurant and Lounge near the base 29 years ago, her concern is for her employees.

She said she doubts she would move the restaurant if a closure became reality. But she worries about having to downsize to accommodate the loss of business.

"That would take probably a good 60 percent of our business," she says with a sigh. "But I'll have to do what I'll have to do to stay open."

Down Gibson a few blocks is Double Gear Automotive, where owner Roy Thompson is hopeful Kirtland will survive this round of BRAC.

Yet, he says, he still wonders about how his business would fare without Kirtland.

"A lot of our customers come from the base," he says. "We'd just have to make due however we could, I guess. We wouldn't need as many technicians, so people would lose jobs."

But Thompson says he's more worried about the national economy and America's future than the fate of the base.

"I'm not going to worry about it," he says. "If it closes, it closes. But that doesn't mean it won't hurt."

Back at Christ United Methodist, the prayers, Hestwood says, will continue.

"We have gotten so many good people over the years from active duty, and many of them retired here," she says. "It would be sad, because it (Kirtland) is a good neighbor."

### **Kirtland advocate has ties to Washington**

Kirtland's biggest advocate could very well be Stuart Purviance, executive director of the Kirtland Partnership Committee.

Purviance, who has spent the better part of the last decade defending the base, says he is "cautiously optimistic" about its chances of coming out ahead in the Pentagon's latest round of realignment and closures.

But he also knows there are some in Washington who might need convincing, including Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

Fortunately, the two share a bit of history Purviance served under Rumsfeld during the latter's first stint in the Pentagon, from 1975-77.

And, perhaps more fortunately, the two will dine together Thursday just days before the deadline for announcements about bases' fates during a reunion dinner for Rumsfeld's '70s-era staff.

### **The scenarios**

According to the Kirtland Partnership Committee, there are five possibilities for every base: No change, Total closure, Loss (of a unit or units), Gain (of a unit or units), A loss/gain combination

*Source: Stuart Purviance, KPC executive director*

Syracuse Post-Standard  
May 10, 2005

### **Squadron Could Bring 460 Jobs To Hancock**

By Pedro Ramirez III, Staff writer

A squadron of unmanned aircraft is coming to Hancock Field Air National Guard Base, and with it as many as 460 jobs and a potential economic benefit to the Syracuse area, top political leaders are saying.

Gov. George Pataki, Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton and Rep. James Walsh announced Monday during a joint news conference at Hancock that the air base would be home to 12 Predator unmanned aerial drones. The three confirmed information first reported by The Post-Standard in March that the squadron would be located at the base in Mattydale.

What they would not say was whether the decision would protect Hancock from an upcoming round of base closures. The Defense Department may announce as early as this week which bases are on a list to be closed.

Here are what the politicians and military officials had to say about some of the questions their announcement has raised:

### **What's coming?**

State political and military leaders expect a squadron of a dozen Predators would need about 460 people to operate and maintain the drones. Pataki says that could increase to about 1,000 workers as the mission evolves.

Some of Hancock's current 1,800 to 2,000 employees and Air Guard members could be retrained to support the Predator mission, said Col. Anthony B. Basile, commander of the 174th Fighter Wing based at Hancock. But, officials said the new mission would create some new jobs, too.

### **How common are these unmanned aircraft?**

The new squadron is part of a U.S. Air Force expansion plan to increase the number of Predator squadrons from the three now based in Nevada to as many as 15, Air Force officials said.

The Air Force's three existing Predator squadrons are stationed at Nellis Air Force Base and Indian Springs Auxiliary Air Field in Nevada. There are about 40 predators in those squadrons, a Nellis Air Force Base spokesman said.

Besides placing a Predator squadron in New York, the Air Force plans to assign Predator missions to the Texas and Arizona Air National Guards.

### **When is this happening?**

The equipment for the new squadron isn't expected to arrive in New York until fiscal year 2009, said Lt. Col. Frank Smolinsky, an Air Force spokesman at the Pentagon. Fiscal year 2009 starts Oct. 1, 2008. But all of the support staff must be put in place and trained before the drones arrive.

### **Does this mean the base won't be shut down?**

Pataki called Monday's announcement a homerun for Central New York and also said that the new mission ensures that Hancock will continue to play a significant role in the U.S. Air Force's future for years to come.

However, Pataki, Clinton and Walsh all hedged about the base's future in relation to the current base-closure process.

They will have to wait until Friday when the Defense Department is expected to release its list of bases scheduled to be closed or realigned before they can address that question.

### **Why choose Hancock?**

It makes sense because of its proximity to Fort Drum, military officials said. The Air Guard members at Hancock would be able to train in conjunction with soldiers at Fort Drum, they said.

Pataki said New York's Air Guard assessed the capability of five bases in the state to determine which one would be best able to handle the Predator mission. After that process, it made a recommendation to him that Hancock is most suitable, Pataki said.

What is the economic impact? Officials couldn't say with certainty how many new jobs the new mission would create. Hancock now employs more than 1,800 people with an annual payroll of about \$53 million.

About 40 percent of the new Predator jobs will be full-time positions, Pataki said.

Hancock's six aircraft shelters are large enough to hold the Predator drones, Basile said. The base also has several acres of space available around the flight line to construct any buildings needed to support the Predators.

### **Who is responsible for landing the squadron?**

Maj. Gen. Thomas P. Maguire Jr., thanked Pataki, Clinton and Walsh for their efforts in bringing the new mission to Hancock Field.

Maguire, the state's adjutant general, has worked with all three political leaders to advocate for the state's military bases, he said.



Clinton is a member of the Senate's Armed Services Committee. Walsh was recently appointed as the chairman of the subcommittee on Military Life and Veterans Affairs for the House of Representatives.

### **How does this affect the F-16s?**

The 174th Fighter Wing maintains 18 F-16 Falcon fighter jets. The aging jets are being phased out as the Air Force moves to newer jets.

Officials say they are concerned, but they don't know how the new Predator mission will affect the F-16 fighter squadron now based at Hancock. The 30 or so F-16 fighter pilots can be trained to operate the new Predators if called on to do so, Basile said.

Through its 50-plus-year history, the 174th has retrained on new aircraft as the military's needs changed.

### **Opinion**

San Antonio Express-News  
May 8, 2005

### **With A Vision, Cities Can Survive Closures**

By Tommy Jordan

Almost 10 years ago, tens of thousands of people in San Antonio held their collective breaths and waited for the 1995 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission to decide the fate of Kelly AFB.

Most of Kelly's 19,000 military and civilian employees and their families, friends and neighbors simply could not believe that Kelly would ever be closed. Not only was it the oldest continuously operating base in the Air Force, but it had the largest Hispanic work force of any facility in the federal government.

For the Hispanic population of San Antonio, Kelly had long been the most traveled path toward the middle class. It is hard to find a family in San Antonio who does not count among its ancestors at least one former Kelly employee.

However, the commission did vote to close the San Antonio Air Logistics Center and realign most of the other organizations to Kelly's neighbor, Lackland AFB.

Today, all across our country, hundreds of communities are doing exactly the same thing as San Antonio did in 1995. By May 16, the Department of Defense will publish the list of installations it recommends for closure or realignment during the latest BRAC round. Speculations run rampant as to which installations will be on, or off, that list. However, outside of a few very select people within the inner circle of the Pentagon, no one knows what that list will look like.

Communities have poured significant amounts of money into contracts with consultants and lobbyists in an attempt to somehow gain either insight or influence. There will not be a politician who represents a district with an installation on the "list" who will not moan and wail that there must have been some mistake and "his" or "her" base should be removed. Not one of those politicians will fail to attempt to influence commission members.

It is my considered opinion that most of those attempts to influence the commission will fall on deaf ears. The commission has the difficult task of reviewing the recommendations of the Department of Defense and making sure those bases that survive this round of BRAC are truly those with the greatest military value.

In prior BRAC rounds, it took only a simple majority of the eight-member commission to add or remove an installation from the recommended list. In 1995, the Defense Department recommended that Brooks AFB be closed, but Kelly was not on the initial list. As a result of community recommendations regarding Brooks, the commission voted to remove it from the list.

However, following commission deliberations and analysis, it added Kelly and ultimately voted for the closure and realignment actions that ensued between 1995 and 2001.

In this next BRAC, it will take a vote of seven of nine commission members to either add or remove a base. In effect, this means that the "final" recommendations of the commission will reflect few changes from the list submitted by Defense.

Unfortunately, some communities have chosen to take the path of total denial, believing that their installations simply cannot be closed. However, many, including San Antonio, have elected to apply for federal grants to explore options and contingency plans should the unthinkable happen and their base is included in the Defense Department's recommendations.

Those who do have some sort of contingency plan will have a head start should one of their installations end up facing closure or realignment. Many, if not the majority, of individuals who are familiar with prior base closures consider the closure of the San Antonio Air Logistics Center one of the most complex closures in Defense Department history and the subsequent redevelopment of KellyUSA one of the most successful.

The successes realized by KellyUSA did not happen by accident. San Antonio owes a significant debt of gratitude to former Mayor Bill Thornton and the late Paul Roberson. Thornton had the vision to call together the Initial Base Adjustment Strategy Committee, or IBASC, which produced "Kelly 21, the Strategic Plan for the Redevelopment of Kelly Air Force Base."

The city then looked to Roberson to bring Kelly 21 to fruition. San Antonio took the recommendations of Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison to heart and made a lot of lemonade when handed a bunch of lemons.

Those communities that end up with closed installations need to realize that base closure does not necessarily mean the end of the world. They should look at the model created by San Antonio and try to do their own imitation of what we did 10 years ago.

Let us all hope that none of the remaining San Antonio installations is on "the list" when it comes out this week or next. However, if we do see a familiar name on the list, let's all pull together and make another pitcher of lemonade from the 2005 lemons.

*Tommy Jordan retired from Kelly AFB in 2001 as its executive director. From 1995 until its closure, he was responsible for oversight and management of all BRAC activities there and was the senior Air Force executive responsible for working with the community on its redevelopment.*

*Editorial*  
Colorado Springs Gazette  
May 8, 2005

## **Bracing For BRAC**

### ***Base closures a reason for anxiety, optimism***

These are anxious days for towns and cities, like ours, with close ties to the military. We're probably only days away from the much anticipated, much dreaded release of the Pentagon's recommended list of base closures and consolidations. And while most signs point to the likelihood that Colorado Springs will emerge from the process unscathed — and might even benefit from the changes — nothing is certain and we're still a long way from being in the clear.

Tuesday was the first day on the job for the nine-member Defense Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission, which will study the Pentagon's list and present its own recommendation to the president in September. If the president signs off, Congress has 45 legislative days to reject or approve it, without amendment.

The Pentagon is taking extraordinary steps to keep the rumor mill in check. Base commanders may get as little as 12 hours advance notice on their status. And even members of Congress won't learn what facilities are on the list until an hour before Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld makes the announcement. So sensitive is the issue that the Pentagon has hired a public relations firm to help handle communications.

The Bush administration, meanwhile, is guarding against any last-ditch efforts by members of Congress to sabotage the process, or to politicize it, which amounts to the same thing, since key to BRAC's success is the perception that it is fair, methodical and free from political manipulation.

Politics could still intrude, of course. It was reported last week that members of Congress might attempt to use the 2006 defense reauthorization bill to toss a monkey wrench into the works. And recently, Mississippi Sen. Trent Lott blocked the nomination of BRAC commission Chairman Anthony Principi, former secretary of veteran affairs, forcing President Bush to use his recess appointment powers to get the panel up and running.

Because "BRAC is a creation of Congress, Congress can change the rules under which BRAC is carried out," one analyst at the Congressional Research Service told Congress Daily. "During previous sessions, some members of Congress have contemplated proposing significant changes to the BRAC process, such as delaying its effects for up to two years, but so sweeping a change has not yet been enacted."

As self-serving as they can be, most members of Congress still seem to understand the long-term damage they could do to national security and the budget process by destroying the only means available for eliminating unneeded military facilities. As disliked as BRAC is, it's also designed with politicians in mind. It gives them political cover by making it appear that such decisions are largely beyond the influence or control of individual members of Congress. BRAC allows Congress to do what it would never do otherwise, given the understandable tendency to protect bases back home.

Rep. Joel Hefley, who chairs the House Armed Services Readiness Subcommittee, was at one time a leading advocate for shelving this round. But his desire to derail BRAC waned as indicators began to suggest that Colorado Springs could benefit this time around. "He personally feels that Colorado is going to come out OK," Hefley spokesperson Kim Sears told us. Given the difficulty of amending the process at this late date, the Senate's traditional support for BRAC and the Bush administration's unwavering commitment to downsizing, "Mr. Hefley realizes that, at this point, it might be better to allow the process to go forward and see what happens," Sears said.

We don't relish another BRAC any more than members of Congress do. A closure here could deliver a body blow to the local economy. But we think the administration has made a convincing case that this is necessary, so we'll hold our breath and wait, torn between narrow self-interest and the broader national

interest. And we try to keep in mind a point made by Principi when he opened his first hearing by reminding Americans that “military bases are a means, not an end.”

This much is clear, though: Colorado Springs has shown over the years that it is a good host to the military, and the military has shown it is a good neighbor.

News & Observer, The (Raleigh, NC)  
May 10, 2005

### **Fortunes ride on base list**

By Jay Price

GOLDSBORO -- Like thousands of business owners, retail workers, civic boosters, government leaders and others across Eastern North Carolina, car dealer Rick Mumford may learn his financial fate this week.

The Pentagon is expected to recommend which domestic military **bases** should be closed or significantly changed. The plan eventually could padlock more than one in 10 of the nation's 425 **bases**.

Mumford paused Monday while waxing a Chevrolet Blazer at Boulevard Auto Sales and laughed ruefully when asked whether he'd heard about what has been billed as the "Mother of All **Base** Closing Rounds." His car lot is a block from the main gate at Seymour Johnson Air Force **Base** on Berkeley Boulevard.

Nearly everyone driving past is going to the **base** or leaving it -- and those are his potential customers. Some of his customers wear uniforms. Others earn their living from those who do.

"Indirectly, 100 percent of my business is because of the **base**," he said. "Yeah, I've been following it pretty closely."

The closings are expected to save taxpayers billions of dollars a year and help the Pentagon fashion a more modern military.

The apprehension in military towns eased a little last week, when Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld said that **base** closings overseas had changed the outlook for U.S. **bases**. Troops from those foreign **bases** will be stationed in the United States, and that means the cuts here will be less than half of what had been announced.

Still, big stakes generate big worries. And the military is a powerful force in North Carolina's economy -- worth more than \$18 billion annually, according to a state-commissioned study.

Most experts think the state's two giant **bases** -- Fort Bragg in Fayetteville and Camp Lejeune in Jacksonville -- are unlikely to close and in fact could gain from **bases** closed elsewhere.

So the apprehension has focused on the smaller **bases**, notably Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point at Havelock -- which is home to an aircraft repair facility with thousands of high-paying civilian jobs -- and Seymour Johnson.

The impact of Seymour Johnson on Wayne County is nowhere more obvious than on Berkeley Boulevard, which leads from U.S. 70 to the main gate.

Over his desk, Mumford keeps an aerial photo of the boulevard in the year his business opened, 1974. There are as many bare dirt lots as businesses in the photo, but not any more. A mall, chain drugstores, strip shopping centers and restaurants have sprung up, all because of the **base**, which pumps about \$1 billion a year through the state's economy, according to the state study. His father paid little more than \$50,000 for the property. Last year, a corner lot a block away sold for more than \$2 million.

"I call this main street Goldsboro now," he said.

The boulevard is a couple of miles from Torero's, a popular Mexican restaurant downtown, but few corners of the area escape the economic influence of the **base**. At lunch Monday, nearly half the diners at Torero's were in green camouflage or Air Force coveralls.

"If the **base** closed, business would come down," said co-owner Miguel Gomez. "I dunno, maybe 30 or 40 percent. I don't know if I would close, but it wouldn't be good."

So far there haven't been any credible leaks about the list, and no one involved has said Seymour Johnson and Cherry Point are especially likely to be chopped.

But state and local leaders have been working for more than two years to polish North Carolina's pro-military image and rezone or buy property around the **bases** to protect them from development. Lt. Gov. Beverly Perdue, who's leading North Carolina's military lobbying effort, often points to the \$20 million in bonds the state has earmarked to help buy land for bigger buffers around the **bases**.

Wayne County manager Lee Smith said that efforts like that to buy property around Seymour Johnson with \$3 million in state funds and \$300,000 to \$600,000 from the city and county have sent the right kind of message.

"That local match is a lot of money for us, but the community sees this as important," he said. "**Bases** like to be where they're wanted."

Smith said local leaders believe that the **base** either won't be on the list at all or will get some sort of addition that brings more troops. Its proximity to a bombing range in Dare County, along with other attributes, makes it valuable to the Pentagon.

"We're walking into this with a really positive attitude," he said.

That sounds great, said Mumford, but with so much at stake, he's still wary.

"It's logical to keep it open," he said, "but I've seen the government do the opposite of what you'd think is logical."

## WHAT'S NEXT

The **base**-closing procedure is a long process with lots of steps.

The Department of Defense must present its list of domestic **bases** recommended for **closure** or "**realignment**" (a change in their mission) by Monday to a presidentially appointed **Base Realignment and Closure** Commission.

The nine-member commission has several months to hone the list.

It must present its recommendations to President Bush by Sept. 8. Bush must either accept all of the recommendations or reject them all by Sept. 23. If he wants changes, he can give the list back to the commission with suggestions.

The commission must then submit a revised list by Oct. 20. If the list is modified, Bush's decision on the new version is due Nov. 7.

When his final list is sent to Congress, it has 45 legislative days, or until adjournment for the year, to vote it up or down without any changes. If it doesn't reject the list, it becomes final.

Albuquerque Tribune, The (NM)  
May 9, 2005

### **Commanders might have no warning**

By Tara Copp

WASHINGTON - In the next week, military communities across the country will learn whether the Pentagon wants to close their hometown **bases**, modify missions or leave them just the way they are.

Here are five things communities should know, based on background briefings by congressional and defense staff members and military communities that lost **bases** in the four previous rounds.

When? The date for the list's release is May 16, but federal publication rules would require the list to be published Friday. The Pentagon did not want to release the list on Friday the 13th but last week said they were "90 percent certain" Friday will be the day.

Will local leaders get advance warning? Local **base** commanders might get a short advance warning perhaps as little as an hour or none at all. In previous rounds, the Pentagon made a "Hill drop" to representatives and senators a day before the formal announcements.

If a **base** is listed, how long before it will close? If the **base** is listed for **closure** in the final Sept. 8 recommendation, it then has up to two years to start shutting down; complete **closure** must take place within six years.

If a **base** is on the list, is there any way to get off the list? It's expected to be more difficult to get off the list this round because of procedural changes. Officials have said that, historically, about 91 percent of **bases** recommended for **closure** have closed.

If a **base** isn't on the list, is it safe? Most likely. Changes to procedure for this round make it very difficult for a **base** to be added by commissioners after the Pentagon releases its recommendations. In order for a **base** to be "added," seven of the nine appointed commissioners would have to vote to add it.

On the day of the announcement, reporters will get a list of the **bases** recommended for **closure** at the end of a news briefing. At that time, the list will be posted online at [www.defenselink.mil](http://www.defenselink.mil).



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**Local bases will survive, many say  
In fact, residents hope for growth after other military sites get the ax**

By BOB CHRISTIE, Californian staff writer

RIDGECREST -- Terry Wilson's biggest worry is that this close-knit community of 28,000 will grow too fast.

That's not the typical response when the nation faces a round of military base closures, as is happening now.

But Wilson's view that China Lake Naval Air Warfare Center will avoid closure, and actually pick up jobs, is widely held here.

Wilson and just about everyone else on the street here says they'd be shocked if China Lake were to close.

They'll know soon.

The list of closures and base realignments could be out as early as today.

Wilson and others in Ridgecrest may be upbeat about this Base Realignment and Closure, or BRAC, round. But China Lake, Edwards Air Force Base and Air Force Production Plant 42 in Palmdale could all face extinction some day.

If that happened, it would devastate east Kern's economy.

#### The Indian Wells Valley

Ridgecrest city officials say 80 percent of the community's jobs are directly supplied by China Lake. The base employs 4,002 military and civilian employees, plus 1,385 contractors.

In the 1990s, when the Pentagon tightened its purse strings, the population here went from 40,000 to 28,000 as people left in droves looking for work.

That was partly the result of defense cuts after the end of the Cold War and a BRAC in 1991 that partnered China Lake with a sister Navy base, Pt. Mugu in Ventura.

Even so, folks in Ridgecrest aren't worried about closure this time around. They point to the Navy's 1.1 million acres and numerous ground test and bombing ranges, and 17,000 square miles of restricted airspace, as irreplaceable assets.

Their confidence may also come from a recent growth spurt.

A new Home Depot opened last year on China Lake Boulevard, the main drag, and a Rite Aid drugstore had its grand opening Friday. A Wal-Mart Supercenter is set to begin construction later this year.

But the effects of a decade of job losses at China Lake are still evident.

Boarded-up homes and shuttered storefronts still mar the face of the city.

The housing market is picking up as the town has gone from a 14 percent vacancy rate in 2000 to 3 percent now.

But a lot of the buyers are retirees attracted by low prices and low crime rates, real estate agent Audrey Nelson of CB Best Realty said. Cheap land means lots of folks are buying mini-ranch lots and building larger homes, and some new subdivisions are under construction.

"As far as BRAC is concerned, we don't know," Nelson said. "But people are optimistic."

Some in town have longer memories.

"(Budget cuts) had an economic impact that lasted the whole decade -- the economy plummeted," Ridgecrest City Manager Harvey Rose said. "The economy has only really started to come back in the last four years. So we know what can happen."

Even after surviving those lean years, the city hasn't created a contingency plan in case the worst happens.

Closing China Lake "would obviously have a devastating effect on the community," Rose said. "But as I say, it is not likely they would shut down the whole base because of the assets they have at the base -- most notably the ranges."

#### Edwards and Antelope Valley

As housing refugees have fled Los Angeles in search of low prices in the desert, the region's economy has diversified, somewhat.

And more non-military folks have moved to Rosamond, Mojave, Tehachapi, small towns historically married to their nearby base.

Meanwhile, the Antelope Valley has reached out to other industries.

Now, regional distribution centers and light manufacturing are the leaders in job creation, said Lew Stults, president of the Antelope Valley Board of Trade. Stults is also a field representative for Rep. Howard P. "Buck" McKeon, whose district extends from Santa Clarita into the Antelope Valley and takes in China Lake, but not Ridgecrest.

But losing Edwards or Plant 42 would hurt, Stults said. Edwards employs 12,000 people.

At Plant 42 in Palmdale, 6,500 jobs would be lost if it were closed.

But like his counterparts in Ridgecrest, Stults doesn't believe the military will close Edwards or Plant 42.

"You'd be hard-pressed in this day and age if you could find a place that you could do the kind of flying and testing that you can do at Edwards AFB," Stults said. "Any minimizing of Edwards would be disastrous -- and a (closure) would be disastrous for the national security."



"We're confident -- but we're also watchful and we think we've done our homework and worked hard enough."

Waiting it out

Base supporters in Ridgecrest and the Antelope Valley are so confident that they're talking about jobs they hope to gain from other bases.

Edwards would be a great location for the U-2 and unmanned Global Hawk reconnaissance planes currently stationed at Beale Air Force Base near Sacramento, Stults said.

And Los Angeles Air Force Base, where the nation's spy satellite production is overseen and often named as a closure target, could move its jobs to Plant 42 with ease.

Ridgecrest supporters see opportunity in the Navy's Naval Air Warfare Center -- Aircraft Division at Patuxent River, Md., or other Navy test facilities.

Taped comments by Rep. Bill Thomas, R-Bakersfield, sent to a town hall meeting in Ridgecrest gave residents even greater hope.

"... anyone who is still worried about the announcement in the middle of May, let me give you some assurance: I cannot believe that we aren't going to see continued growth in the High Desert, both at China Lake and at Edwards," Thomas said.

McKeon shares that view, Stults said. The congressman believes it is time for the East Coast to take a hit after California lost a disproportionate number of bases in the four previous base closing rounds, he said.

California has lost the most bases and jobs of any state since BRACs began in 1988, according to the state's council examining base closures.

The state lost 29 bases, nearly 30 percent of the total, and 50 percent of the employment losses, the Council on Base Support and Retention reported in April.

"We need to be realistic and know that any base could be a target. Any community -- even this one," Stults said.



**DAILY BRIEFING** May 11, 2005

### **Base closings recommendations expected Friday**

By George Cahlink

Military communities will hear details next week from Pentagon officials about why their bases were closed or realigned.

The Defense Department is set to announce on Friday how many of the nation's 425 military installations it wants to close or realign. An independent, nine-member Base Realignment and Closure Commission will then begin reviewing those recommendations next week and give its final recommendations to the president by no later than Sept. 8. The president and Congress then must accept or reject them in their entirety.

The commission will hear testimony from Defense officials involved with the BRAC process next week, including: Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Gen. Richard Myers on Monday; top uniformed and civilian leaders from the Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps on Tuesday; top uniformed and civilian leaders from the Army on Wednesday; and senior defense officials on Wednesday and Thursday.

Senior Defense officials briefed reporters this week on details of the BRAC process, but declined to say when the final list would be announced or offer any indications of how many or what kinds of bases would be on it.

The Pentagon is required to publish its recommendations in the *Federal Register* no later than Monday, May 16, but the announcement is expected sooner to avoid leaks. Congressional sources and BRAC lobbyists say lawmakers have been told to expect base closing announcements Friday morning.

Philip Grone, deputy undersecretary for installations and environment, said at the briefing that the closings will further several Defense goals including accelerating military transformation, maximizing joint utilization of military bases and eliminating unneeded bases so more money can go toward warfighting. The Pentagon says it has saved billions from four previous rounds of base closings in 1988, 1991, 1993 and 1995 that closed 97 major installations and realigned 55 other major bases.

Grone dismissed earlier reports suggesting that one in four military bases could be closed or realigned. He says studies show that Defense has 24 percent extra space on bases, but that some of that will remain in case it's needed to "surge" for war.

Michael Wynne, undersecretary of Defense for installation and environment, said that in past rounds, the BRAC commission backed about 85 percent of the Pentagon's recommendations. He says the Pentagon expects that even fewer will be overturned in this round.



**DAILY BRIEFING** May 11, 2005

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By George Cahlink

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Meanwhile, on Wednesday, Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan said she would file a federal lawsuit on behalf of Democratic Gov. Rod Blagojevich if any of the state's National Guard bases are included in the closure list.

Illinois has Air National Guard bases in Springfield and Peoria. Madigan and other BRAC opponents contend that the federal law prevents closure of National Guard bases in a state without the consent of its governor.

That reading of the law is disputed by BRAC supporters who contend the commission has the authority to close bases.

■ *CongressDaily* contributed to this report.

Washington Times  
May 12, 2005  
Pg. 6

## **Pentagon To Suggest Forces Share Facilities At Some Bases**

By Bill Gertz, The Washington Times

The Pentagon will recommend joining elements of different branches of the armed services on some military bases when it announces proposed base closings in upcoming days, defense officials say.

As part of its "joint" forces concept, the Pentagon thinks that having the Army, Air Force, Navy and Marines share facilities will reduce costs and improve "combat effectiveness."

Michael Wynne, undersecretary of defense for acquisition in charge of the base closure plan, said the proposed changes were guided by military "interrelationships, jointness and transformation."

Defense officials, who expect the proposed domestic base closures, shifts and changes to be made public by Monday, said bases selected for closure were picked based on "military value" and that no target number was established.

"What we've tried to do in many ways is ... ask ourselves questions about whether our military infrastructures sufficiently support the war fighter as opposed to simply looking at solely the mission of only one service," said Phil Grone, a second Pentagon official.

The closure list is the first base cutback to reflect the views of Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld, who wants to transform the U.S. military into more streamlined, easier-to-deploy forces.

Pentagon spokesman Larry DiRita said that the goal of the base restructuring is to cut from the estimated 20 percent to 25 percent of "excess capacity" in military bases.

The billions of dollars saved will be used to modernize weapons, improve the infrastructure and quality of life for troops and improve military preparedness, the Pentagon says.

The Pentagon says the four Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) rounds since 1988 cut roughly 20 percent of Pentagon bases, about 235, producing a savings of about \$17.7 billion through 2001. Recurring savings after 2001 are estimated to be \$7.3 billion annually.

The military maintains 425 bases in the United States, plus 70 bases in foreign countries. Additionally, the Pentagon operates 3,535 small facilities in the United States. Pentagon officials say all facilities were considered under the latest round of closings.

Operations such as Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland, which the president uses for travel, and Vandenberg Air Force Base in California, where parts of the new U.S. strategic missile defense system is deployed, are considered unlikely to be closed.

As in the past, base closings have triggered fierce lobbying by local officials and members of Congress who seek to prevent the closures and the loss of jobs and money to local communities with bases. Governors from New York to California have lobbied the independent BRAC panel, which will review Mr. Rumsfeld's plan, not to cut bases in their states.

The domestic base restructuring will coincide with Pentagon plans to shift U.S. bases overseas as part of a global force posture review. U.S. troops and forces are being cut in Europe and in South Korea.

The new overseas force structure calls for setting up several strategic "hubs" -- centralized bases -- in key locations around the globe that would be used for the rapid deployment of military forces for events ranging from war to humanitarian relief work.

USA Today  
May 12, 2005  
Pg. 8

## **Fewer Active-Duty Bases Face Closure, Official Says**

### ***Military likely to transfer more operations***

By Dave Moniz, USA Today

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon's latest list of proposed military base closures set to be released Friday is expected to be less devastating to military communities than originally feared.

The Defense Department will propose closing fewer active-duty bases than many had originally projected, according to a senior military official who has seen a draft of the list. The official asked to remain anonymous because of a signed confidentiality agreement.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld is still tinkering with the list that he'll forward to a base closure commission, the official added.

In the four previous rounds of closures — 1988, 1991, 1993 and 1995 — the Department of Defense closed 97 major domestic bases. In the largest round of closures, in 1993, the department targeted 28 major bases. This time, the official said, there will be fewer.

Instead, the Defense Department is likely to transfer more operations to other bases than in previous rounds. Some National Guard and Reserve bases around the United States are likely to be closed and their functions shifted to active-duty bases elsewhere, the official and defense analysts say. Realignment typically means that part of one base is moved to another but the base remains open.

### **Excess room**

The Pentagon has said it has 20% to 25% more room than it needs for the current size of the military, a statement that had sparked lobbying campaigns in communities to keep local bases open. But Rumsfeld also said that only about 20% of the excess would be targeted. The Pentagon doesn't plan to eliminate all of its surplus installations because it wants to accommodate future growth.

There are 3,727 military sites in the United States, according to the Defense Department. Of those, 95 are considered large bases, 99 are medium-sized sites and the rest are classified as small.

The Pentagon could move a number of bases, headquarters or other facilities from high-cost areas such as the Northeast corridor to lower-cost areas around the country, mirroring cost-cutting moves in private industry. Bases that have only a single purpose are more vulnerable than those that have several headquarters or missions. That change is in keeping with Rumsfeld's desire to get the military branches to cooperate more closely. Such efforts are a cornerstone of his plan to transform the nation's fighting forces.

Rumsfeld must present his recommendations to the nine-member Base Realignment and Closure Commission no later than Monday. That panel, chaired by former Veterans Affairs secretary Anthony

Principi, will conduct hearings and issue its own report to President Bush by Sept. 8. Bush must accept or reject the list in total. If he approves, the list moves to Congress for approval.

### **No radical moves**

Military bases are one place that parochialism often holds sway. Each service has its own installations, weapons systems, training methods and culture.

Experts say that Rumsfeld, who has taken an unprecedented role in overseeing the base closure process, is not likely to make radical moves such as putting members of the Army, Navy, Marines and Air Force together in “joint” combat bases.

What's more likely, says Loren Thompson, a military analyst at the Lexington Institute, is a consolidation of functions such as research labs and repair and logistics facilities from higher-cost parts of the country to areas that are considered more affordable.

That means more bases could move to the South, which is now home to many Army and Marine Corps bases and is “also uniformly supportive of the military,” Thompson says.

This round is also likely to feature a new dimension — the further merging of the active duty and Guard and Reserve, which for decades have operated on separate facilities.

Chris Hellman, a base closure analyst with the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation, says that wars in Iraq and Afghanistan — where Guardsmen and reservists have played a major role — illustrate how closely the active military and Guard and Reserve have become. “We've always had this artificial barrier between Reserve and active facilities. Why are they not operating out of active bases?” he says.

St. Petersburg Times  
May 12, 2005  
Pg. 1

### **Hopes For MacDill's Survival Run High**

*Supporters say they've heard nothing to indicate Tampa's Air Force base is on the closure list.*

By Paul de la Garza and Bill Adair

TAMPA - With the Pentagon poised to release Friday the list of military bases it wants to close, supporters of MacDill Air Force Base appear upbeat as some signs indicate the news will be good.

The Pentagon's recommendations have been closely guarded, with only a handful of officials having access.

But if the mood of MacDill backers is any indication, the base's future could be brighter than ever.

"Based on conversations I've had, I'm satisfied MacDill will not be on that list," said Rep. C.W. Bill Young, R-Indian Shores, one of MacDill's biggest boosters and chairman of the House appropriations subcommittee on defense.

Several sources inside and outside the military say it appears MacDill not only will stay open but might double its number of aerial refueling tankers, pending closure of an air base in Grand Forks, N.D.

MacDill, one of the Tampa Bay region's economic powerhouses, has 12 aerial refueling tankers. But supporters long have pushed for more to secure its future.

In an interview Wednesday, John Marshall, leader of the effort to keep the Grand Forks base open, said he had heard his base would close and that MacDill would get some of its tankers. He said he had been unable to confirm that through the Pentagon.

"I don't believe anything until I see it in writing," Marshall said, noting that he has been through three previous rounds of base closings.

Retired Navy Adm. Robert J. Natter, the lead Florida consultant on base closings, said he had heard similar rumblings.

"I have nothing concrete with respect to our bases, and MacDill specifically," Natter said in an e-mail. "I have heard the same rumors, but until the list is made public, I must remain optimistic, but cautiously so."

Officials cautioned that nothing has been set in stone, and that as late as Wednesday afternoon the 1,000-page document containing the recommendations was still undergoing revision.

On Friday, an army of 100 Pentagon staffers is scheduled to descend on Capitol Hill to distribute the report to Congress.

After that, the recommendations will go to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission, which makes a final recommendation to the president.

Despite the news blackout by the Pentagon and the office of Gov. Jeb Bush, MacDill boosters say they have heard nothing to indicate MacDill will be on the closure list. Several factors could work in its favor.

MacDill is home to the U.S. Central Command, which is directing military efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Supporters say they think the Pentagon will be reluctant to uproot CentCom during a time of war.

The U.S. Special Operations Command, which oversees top-secret military units, plays a key role in the war on terrorism. Similar to CentCom, the Pentagon presumably won't relocate SOCom amid that war.

Defense Department officials won't want to defy Young because the Indian Shores Republican controls the Pentagon's checkbook.

Young said he thought MacDill would not be on the list.

"And if it is, we will have a major effort to make sure it doesn't stay on that list," he said.

Last week at a hearing of the base closure commission in Washington, retired Air Force Gen. J.B. Davis, co-chair of a state panel charged with protecting Florida's 21 military installations, said he had a good feeling about MacDill.

On Wednesday, Davis, of Palm Harbor, who served on the 1995 base closure commission, said: "I'm still optimistic, but we will have to wait until Friday the 13th."

A few days ago, during a speech in St. Petersburg, retired Army Gen. Tommy Franks, who ran back-to-back wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, said the federal government has poured too much money and effort into MacDill to close it.

Tampa businessman Al Austin, who serves on the state panel with Davis, said he was "clueless" about MacDill's future. He also cautioned against putting any stock in the likelihood that it will stay open.

Austin said that on the morning it was announced New York would host the 2004 Republican National Convention, he had been assured by the governor that Tampa had been selected.

Miami lawyer and lobbyist Al Cardenas, former chairman of the Florida Republican Party, said he has been working on the South Florida bases and believes Florida stands a good chance of picking up assets from bases being closed overseas.

"Florida has made a good case," Cardenas said. "We should fare better than most places. One of the greatest opportunities is the closure of bases abroad. That will have significant impact and will be absorbed by bases in the U.S."

Former House Majority Leader Dick Armey, one of several lobbyists hired to help Florida protect its bases, said the battle won't end Friday.

Bases that are not on the list still will need to fight to make sure the base closure commission does not add them. And bases that are marked for closure will still fight to be removed from the list.

"Those recommendations are going to pretty much set the story," Armey said. "If you're not on the list, your job is to make sure you don't get on. What will be a really big job is to get yourself off."

According to MacDill, the base's annual economic impact on the Tampa Bay area is about \$6-billion. About 7,000 military and civilian personnel work on the base, making it one of the region's top four employers. MacDill also helps support more than 105,000 spinoff jobs, officials say.

The economic impact of Florida's 21 military installations is \$32-billion a year, trailing only agriculture and tourism as the state's top moneymakers. Jobs generated in the state by the defense industry total 265,000.

*Tallahassee bureau chief Lucy Morgan and researcher Cathy Wos contributed to this report.*

Albuquerque Tribune  
May 11, 2005  
Pg. 1

### **Director Spreads The Value Of Kirtland**

By Tamara N. Shope

A photograph of Donald Rumsfeld smiles on an old friend in a Downtown Albuquerque office.

"To Stuart Purviance who can do it all and has with skill and a smile," Rumsfeld wrote on the photo.



The current defense secretary was serving his first term in that post in the Pentagon in 1975 when he met Purviance.

He was Rumsfeld's protocol officer, organizing everything from dinners with foreign dignitaries to business meetings with staff.

Purviance had been doing that job for years and for three previous defense secretaries.

These days, Purviance is still organizing, still rubbing elbows with bigwigs and still spending time in Washington, D.C. and still hoping to impress Rumsfeld.

This time, he's doing it to promote Kirtland Air Force Base. As executive director of the Kirtland Partnership Committee, his sole purpose is to make sure everybody who needs to know appreciates the value of Albuquerque's military base.

On Friday, when Rumsfeld is expected to announce which military installations he wants to trim, expand or spare, Purviance hopes to still be the man who can "do it all."

Lt. Gen. Leo Marquez, one of the people Purviance answers to, says the executive committee is already impressed with his connections and abilities.

"What he does is quite important to us," Marquez says. "And what the Kirtland Partnership Committee does is important to the city of Albuquerque, to preserve and expand Kirtland Air Force Base."

Marquez, who led the 1995 effort to save the base from closure, said Purviance's Pentagon savvy has been "incredibly useful" during this Kirtland campaign.

"His contacts and his experience up there are important," Marquez says. "His knowledge of the process is very useful."

"We give him direction, and he marches on."

In 1937, Purviance was born in Sao Paulo, Brazil, to a U.S. family. His father, Harold, worked for a tire company and established businesses all over the world.

Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro were all Stuart Purviance knew for his first nine years.

"I spoke Portuguese before I spoke English," he says from his third-floor office Downtown.

"And I was fortunate. My parents had no prejudice whatsoever," he says. "I was stunned when I got into a cab in Montgomery, Alabama, and said, 'Can you take me to the base?' and the driver, who was black, said, 'Sir, you have to get in that white cab over there.' That wasn't part of my upbringing in the slightest."

That upbringing helped him appreciate life and other cultures, he says including Vietnam, where he flew helicopters for the Air Force.

"I did enjoy the Air Force, and I grew up in Vietnam," he says, laughing about how immature he was fresh out of college. "I became a captain in Vietnam. It was 1964. I watched the war grow in front of me, and I got a lot of experience."

The country fascinated Purviance, and he says his thoughts often drift to the place he spent 2 1/2 years.

"It's beautiful. That's the next trip I hope to take."

Shortly after Vietnam, the captain reported to Andrews Air Force Base, where the rest of his career took form.

There, Purviance decided to take steps that would make inspection teams feel welcome, including leaving blank, stamped postcards on their beds.

"A grizzled old sergeant said, 'We're not going to get a better grade because you put a postcard in their room.' I said, 'I'm not trying for a better grade. I'm trying to treat them the way I'd like to be treated.' "

Noting that ambition, his colonel called with an idea that would change Purviance's career.

"He said, 'I nominated you to be the protocol officer for the Military Airlift Command.' I said, 'Well, what's that?' and he said, 'Stu, it's what you are doing now,' " Purviance said.

From then on, taking care of the details was no longer a courtesy but a career.

When President Carter took office in 1977, a young Army colonel was chosen to work at the Pentagon.

"I found him very impressive. Name's Colin Powell," Purviance says. "Ended up being a substitute in my poker group. He's gone on to bigger and better things."

One of the things Powell became, besides secretary of state, was Purviance's friend and hero. Purviance says he's even mentioned in Powell's autobiography, "My American Journey."

"When he got promoted to brigadier general he put this in his book I gave him this framed story," he says. "It was a short, true story from the Lincoln administration. The White House telegraph operator came to Lincoln and said, 'We've lost 105 horses and a brigadier general.' And the president supposedly said, 'Well, I can make a general in five minutes, but 105 horses is a problem.'"

"And Colin goes on to say how much he liked that for the humility it displays. And he put it in his office to remind him he needed that humility."

The two have lost touch in the last few years, Purviance says, but Powell continues to be a hero.

"He was the type of person early on that you would follow into a burning building. He was a facilitator. He was smart, fun great sense of humor."

Purviance spent 29 1/2 years in the military, the last handful at Kirtland.

"I was at Kirtland for six years before I retired, and I thought I knew the base. But I didn't know the base as well as I thought I did," he says. "And now I know a lot about the base and every unit of significance out there."

After retiring from the military, Purviance worked for the Albuquerque Convention and Visitors Bureau. Eight years ago, he applied for his job at the Kirtland Partnership Committee.

The work is important, he says, not only for the base but the community.

"It counts. Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. The base closed," he says. "Nobody in the community spoke up for it, and that was a factor."

Purviance says he fully supports base closures, "but not at Kirtland."

"Economic impact is the most important thing to a community. But there's a second thing that's almost as important," he says. "That's the national interest patriotism, if you will. They want to support their base. They want to support their military. That has been the case here since 1939."

And, he says, as long as he has his say, it will continue to be the case in Albuquerque.

Seattle Post-Intelligencer  
May 11, 2005

### **Surviving A Base Closing: Face Reality, Then Rebound**

By Mike Barber, Seattle Post-Intelligencer Reporter

Take it from those who have been there:

The dumbest thing communities fighting to keep military bases can do is to spend all their energy and money fighting base closures and put little or nothing into contingencies in case they fail.

Communities that lost bases over the past 17 years and planned for the unthinkable suffered severe initial shocks but for the most part bounced back with better per-capita income growth and employment rates than national averages, according to two separate studies, conducted by the Government Accountability Office and the non-profit Washington, D.C.-based Taxpayers for Common Sense lobby.

"If a community is in a position to be part of the excess infrastructure, how do you get ready? Do you fight and the inevitable happens? Or do you plan for it, too, to do what you can to make a very bad situation better?" asks Keith Ashdown, policy vice president for Taxpayers for Common Sense.

"What we found is that the communities that actually planned in the long run did a lot, lot better," he said.

Closed Air Force and Navy bases generally do better, providing communities with infrastructure for airports or ports, or industrial parks. Instead of relying upon one big employer, communities are forced to diversify, acquire taxable and often prime development land. Quite a few colleges have grown from closed military bases.

Not all communities bounce back, however. Some became ghost towns, having had absolutely nothing but a military presence to sustain them.

"The thing you will have some guarantee of is that immediate shock that could hurt but is something you can get through, and you have a chance to turn things around quickly" by facing reality, Ashdown said.

The loss in 1991 of Fort Ord, a 28,000-acre infantry-training base in Monterey County on the central California coast, was Washington's big gain when most troops were sent to Fort Lewis.

Though Monterey County civic leaders worked hard in advance, Fort Ord's closure was something of a shock. They expected the nearby Naval Postgraduate School to be the casualty.

With then-Congressman Leon Panetta leading the community effort to avoid closure, "a lot of people felt political connections would help, but that didn't prove to be true," said Michael Houlemard, executive officer of the Fort Ord Reuse Authority. The authority today oversees the base's transformation for use by a university and businesses and as a recreation area. There is also a cleanup of hazardous materials and areas used for decades for live-fire training.

The community was aghast at the loss of a \$500 million payroll, 15,000 soldiers and 7,000 civilian defense jobs. Businesses folded, and vacancy rates soared, especially in the cities of Marina and Seaside. "It wasn't economic devastation, but it was significant, from 6 percent to 18 percent unemployment," Houlemard said.

It has taken a decade of evolutionary change, but "we've rebounded and rebuilt several areas," Houlemard said.

Part of the 1917-era post is now California State University at Monterey. Many former bases are now colleges, which is not surprising given that 90 percent of the military's job is educating college-age people. Four other jurisdictions have land on the former base for a research and development park, a shopping center, two golf courses, proposed hotels and 12,000 housing units, new and rehabilitated.

"I believe that if you handle real estate well, military installations come with a great potential for redevelopment" and in ways that fix old problems ignored by 20th-century developers, especially by paying attention to fair housing and environmentally friendly concerns, Houlemard said.

Orlando Sentinel  
May 11, 2005

### **Base Closings Would Wring Florida's Wallet**

By Christopher Boyd, Sentinel Staff Writer

Orlando and communities across the country are once again sweating bullets over the future of their local military installations.

The federal government is about to embark on what could be a major slashing of the military's 425 bases, with the Pentagon expected to recommend Friday which ones should be closed. The move could trim as much as 25 percent of the armed forces' capacity.

Central Florida, which lost the Orlando Naval Training Center during a round of 1993 cuts, has something to protect: a simulation center that employs about 1,500 military and civilian personnel and buys a host of locally made high-tech hardware.

The Central Florida Research Park seems an unlikely setting for one of the region's most important military assets. Its manicured lawns, smartly designed office buildings and lazily curving streets offer hardly a hint that the park plays a major role in the Pentagon's effort to push the armed forces toward a high-tech future.

Based there are the Orlando Simulation Commands -- the Army's PEO STRI and Navy's Nav-Air -- that buy high-tech training equipment from an assortment of suppliers, many of which have operations in Central Florida primarily to be close to their customers.

It is a thriving relationship that could collapse if nine members of a newly appointed commission decide the Pentagon could save money by moving those operations elsewhere. The commission will review the recommendations and send a report to President Bush by Sept. 8. Statewide, military operations contribute about \$44 billion a year to the economy, making it the most important money generator after tourism and agriculture. Defense-related spending accounts for 714,500 Florida jobs, 138,000 directly funded by the military, according to the state.

To protect that engine, Florida is fighting an all-out campaign.

Gov. Jeb Bush retained a well-connected team of consultants at \$50,000 a month to convince Pentagon planners that each of the state's 21 military installations is too valuable to close. The team includes former House Majority Leader Dick Armey and former Defense Secretary William Cohen.

Communities with bases have mounted campaigns of their own. For example, The Coast Defense Alliance, a Brevard County coalition, has campaigned to protect Patrick Air Force Base.

"We feel good about what Florida has done to this point to prepare itself," said Pamela Dana, director of the Governor's Office of Tourism, Trade and Economic Development, the agency coordinating the effort.

But Dana said even the state's well-planned effort offers no guarantees: "I don't think any installation can look at itself as being safe."

So far, little is known about which bases might be in jeopardy. The Defense Department has imposed complete silence on its review, which seeks cuts offering strategic and economic benefits for the military.

The Base Realignment and Closure Commission, or BRAC, will review the suggestions and recommend changes. It is to be the final round of cuts, which began in 1988 and have accounted for more than \$30 billion in savings.

The Orlando Naval Training Center was a casualty of an earlier BRAC decision. The decision to combine the center with a similar base in Illinois cost Central Florida 6,500 military and civilian jobs with a payroll of \$240 million.

The decommissioned center has since been demolished and replaced by Baldwin Park, a sprawling commercial and residential development with high-end condominiums and homes.

In this latest round, Defense Department planners are expected to favor bases that enable military branches to train together and share operations. Though the military has simulation centers in other states, none is as extensive as Orlando's, where all the major branches of the military cooperate on projects.

"I think this BRAC will be the most important thing the Defense Department does in 2005. It will define the future of the military for the next 20 years," said Kenneth Beeks, vice president for policy with the Business Executives for National Security in Washington, D.C.

Though the process is supposedly removed from politics, state and local governments have been preparing for years.

A consortium of Orlando civic and business leaders -- including Orange County Mayor Rich Crotty, the Metro Orlando Economic Development Commission, the University of Central Florida and representatives from the simulation industry -- have studied the process and formulated defenses for the simulation commands.

"I think that this community was extremely well-versed in what is going on," said Herb Smetheram, a consultant with ZHA, an Orlando real-estate development company that has worked on the base-closing issue. "It put together a strong argument why the Orlando facilities shouldn't be on the list."

The region's modeling, simulation and training industry is large. In a 2003 report, the National Center for Simulation estimated the field employs nearly 6,000 workers, earning \$425 million annually, in metropolitan Orlando.

Supporters argue that the simulation operations are key to an evolving military that demands high-tech training.

Crotty recently traveled to Virginia to lobby Navy officials.

"I'm optimistic that we have come a long way during the last year," Crotty said. "I'm optimistic that we not only won't be on the list but that the operations here might be expanded."

Crotty said a decision to move the simulation commands elsewhere would be traumatic, but not fatal, to the region's technology sector.

"If the question is whether the whole industry would cave in like a house of cards, well, I don't think it would," Crotty said. "Would it have a negative impact on Orange County? I think so. Very definitely."

Indeed, companies that rely on Pentagon contracts are dreading what might happen if area installations close or move.

Greg Goebel, spokesman for Raydon Corp., a Daytona Beach simulation-equipment maker, said his company finds its relative close proximity to PEO STRI advantageous.

"The large companies that have satellite offices in Orlando would be affected if something happened to PEO STRI, and some might leave," Goebel said.

Though the Pentagon insists it won't be swayed by local arguments, it hasn't stopped politicians from trying.

Last week, U.S. Rep. Tom Feeney, R-Oviedo, escorted U.S. Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., to visit Orlando simulation companies and address a town meeting at UCF.

"I'm optimistic and hopeful," Feeney said. "But since this process is done in secret, there is really no guarantee of the outcome."

He fears the relatively small commands could be shuffled elsewhere in a consolidation.

"We are trying to convince people that there is much more here than they might think," Feeney said. "You have academics here at the University of Central Florida. You have commercial folks here. There is so much brain power that can't be replicated in another location."

Sen. Bill Nelson, D-Fla., said he doubts the BRAC panel, with its focus on full-fledged bases, will even consider the simulation commands. And he said Patrick Air Force Base in Brevard County -- Central Florida's other military installation -- is probably also relatively immune from closure.

"As far as Patrick goes, you simply need support facilities for Kennedy Space Center," Nelson said. "We have added military construction dollars for a new security operations center at Patrick. I think we're OK there, in Orlando and in the rest of the state, too."

Atlanta Journal-Constitution  
May 12, 2005  
Pg. 3

### **Georgia Ready If Pentagon Ax Falls**

By Ron Martz and Bob Kemper

When the Pentagon's recommended list of base closures comes out Friday morning, Gov. Sonny Perdue will be ready to roll -- or fly, if need be.

Perdue plans a personal visit Friday to any Georgia community that has a military base that shows up on the list, which is scheduled for public release about 10 a.m. Members of Congress whose districts will be affected by the changes are expected to receive notice as early as 8 a.m.

"We've just got to be prepared for any possibility," said U.S. Rep. Phil Gingrey, a Republican whose district includes Dobbins Air Reserve Base in Marietta.

Retired Army Brig. Gen. Phil Browning, head of the state's Military Affairs Coordinating Committee, said each community with a base has two groups ready to start work if their base is on the list.

One group will analyze the Pentagon's decision-making process to see if mistakes were made in the selection of that particular facility. The other will look at long-term redevelopment of the facility if it is ultimately closed and turned over to the local community.

The base realignment and closure -- or BRAC -- list is a Pentagon recommendation to reduce infrastructure and save money.

A nine-member independent commission will study the Pentagon's list and make its own recommendations to President Bush in September. Bush can either reject the commission's findings or approve them and send them to Congress, which then must either approve or reject the list without changing it.

Although the process is officially nonpolitical, three Georgia lawmakers -- Gingrey, U.S. Rep. Tom Price and U. S. Sen. Johnny Isakson -- took advantage of Vice President Dick Cheney's trip to Smyrna a week ago to lobby him on behalf of Georgia's bases. While Cheney came to talk about Social Security, the lawmakers tried to impress on him the importance of Georgia facilities.

Cheney "listened and understood the importance of it," said Gingrey spokeswoman Becky Ruby. "But I don't think he offered any assurances."

*RON MARTZ in Atlanta; BOB KEMPER in Washington*

Seattle Times  
May 12, 2005  
Pg. 1

## **Hawaii's Campaign For Carrier Could Create Waves In Everett**

By Alex Fryer, Seattle Times staff reporter

First thing tomorrow, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld is expected to release a list of military bases around the country he wants closed or merged, ending speculation about the fate of \$3.7 billion the Pentagon pumps into Washington's economy each year.

While all of the state's military installations are theoretically fair game, most are considered safe.

And only Naval Station Everett, which hosts the aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln, faces stiff competition from another state.

Hawaii wants an aircraft carrier, and its seven-term senator, Democrat Daniel Inouye, has been courting military planners.

In a report released Monday, the Overseas Basing Commission, an advisory group to Congress, suggested the Navy shift a carrier to Hawaii, even if it "entails major political and economic impact" for another port.

Washington's congressional delegation and local officials have traveled to the Pentagon in recent months to tout Naval Station Everett and other bases. And some of those conversations have focused squarely on competition from Hawaii, which hasn't based a carrier at Pearl Harbor since World War II.

"We have always monitored that possibility. We know it's out there," said Pat McClain, government-affairs coordinator for the city of Everett. "We have made our case on the merits of this facility." Completed in 1994, Naval Station Everett employs about 6,300 military and civilian personnel. It contributes about \$431 million to the Snohomish County economy.

Washington has nine major bases and more than 100 smaller facilities, including hospitals, camps, depots, signal stations and recruiting offices.

Naval Station Everett, Whidbey Island Naval Air Station in Oak Harbor and Fairchild Air Force Base in Spokane were placed on the closure list in past rounds, only to be removed later.

Although final decisions will be made by the Base Relocation And Closure (BRAC) Commission, this year's round gives far more power to the Defense Secretary.

Unlike previous BRAC commissions in 1988, 1991, 1993 and 1995, the nine-member group can only add to or subtract from Rumsfeld's list if a supermajority of seven commissioners agree.

That means closures unveiled tomorrow will likely head to President Bush, who can ask the commission to revise the list but cannot alter it himself.

Bush must certify the list by Nov. 7 and Congress has 45 days to reject it or it becomes law.



Rumsfeld said he wants this round to focus on combining bases. For example, it's possible he will recommend McChord Air Force Base in Tacoma transform into an Army Air Base under the command of nearby Fort Lewis. That scenario would streamline operations but not likely impact many jobs.

Taking a cue from Rumsfeld's emphasis on joint operations, the governor's office and the state's congressional delegation tried to market the state as a whole.

A white paper released to the BRAC Commission on April 29 listed the capabilities of the major bases, and noted their cooperation.

"Our bases are near enough to each other to create a strong joint operations and training environment," the report says. "They are also situated in geographic locations that will enhance protection from a terrorist or military attack."

In devising tomorrow's list, Pentagon planners take into account a wide range of financial, strategic and political considerations.

Hawaii, for example, touts its proximity to East Asia and long history with military bases.

But Everett's lobbyist in D.C., retired Adm. James Seely, noted Hawaii lacks practice ranges for carrier fighter-bombers, which would have to train stateside.

And building new carrier infrastructure in Hawaii could cost around \$2.2 billion.

The Pentagon may not decide whether to deploy a carrier in Hawaii tomorrow, leaving that choice for another day.

And even if Pentagon planners want to go ahead with a new station in Hawaii, some military watchers say it should move one of the five carriers at Naval Station Norfolk in Virginia.

"We don't need to move carriers from the West Coast. We need to move them from the East Coast," said Loren Thompson, military analyst at the Lexington Institute in Arlington, Va. "Washington state is considered to be a hub of military activity."

But Sen. John Warner, R-Va., chairman of the powerful Senate Armed Services Committee, would likely oppose such a move.

Surviving the BRAC isn't cheap; Washington has already doled out \$500,000 in public money to military communities to pay for consultants, studies and pamphlets.

If a base is placed on the list, the surrounding community can apply for \$5 million in state aid to pay for infrastructure improvements to better its chances with the BRAC commission.

In addition, local communities could apply for \$150,000 if they are targeted by another base slated for closure.

With billions of defense dollars at stake, it's common for targeted communities to point fingers at others they want to be in the commission's sights.

And if it comes to that, Washington officials say they are ready to play hardball.

"We are poised to respond," said Antonio Ginatta, adviser to Gov. Christine Gregoire.

## **Military employment**

*Military and civilian personnel as a percentage of total county employment*

**Island County** — 68 percent

**Kitsap County** — 36 percent

**Pierce County** — 14 percent

**Spokane County** — 3 percent

**Snohomish County** — 2 percent

*Source: Office of the governor*

## **Base-closure timeline**

**Tomorrow** — Pentagon announces military bases it wants to close. The Base Relocation And Closure Commission may add to or subtract from the list.

**Sept. 8** — Deadline for sending the list to President Bush. He may ask the commission to revise it but cannot change it himself.

**Nov. 7** — President must certify list. Congress has 45 days to reject the list or it becomes law.

Christian Science Monitor  
May 12, 2005  
Pg. 1

## **US Towns Brace For Base-Closing Wave**

*The Pentagon is expected to announce a large number of closings among its 425 domestic bases.*

By Sara B. Miller and Mark Sappenfield, Staff writers of The Christian Science Monitor

KITTERY, MAINE – As a young boy Dennis Estes relied on the late afternoon whistle that sounded from the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard to know that dinnertime was approaching. Decades later, the whistle still sounds several times a day from the Piscataqua River between Maine and New Hampshire. But it could soon fall silent.

The shipyard may be one of the military installations across the country included in the Pentagon's newest wave of base closings - the first in a decade. Residents here are bracing for a possibility that would impact them in ways both big and small - from more than 4,500 lost jobs to discarded rituals, such as the trill of a whistle, that are the fabric of daily life in this coastal community.

"I don't know what this town is going to do," says Mr. Estes, a former town councilor whose family has worked at the shipyard for at least three generations.

Friday morning, the wait is expected to be over. After months of speculation, the Pentagon is set to release the roster of bases scheduled for closure as part of an ambitious - and controversial - plan for a leaner and more flexible military in the 21st century.

For communities on the list, it will mark the start of a summer of frantic lobbying to save the jobs, money, and prestige that a US base brings.

Yet for the wisest towns, experts say, the shift marks the beginning of something else altogether - planning for life after the installation is gone. From Colorado plains to Indiana cornfields, history suggests that communities have suffered less when they have been willing to let go and move forward - in many cases coming up with new plans for the site even before the base-closing list is finalized.

"The process should really begin on Friday," says Tim Ford, executive director of the Association for Defense Communities in Washington. Communities on the list "need to start putting together a Plan B."

For now, however, the temptation is to try to reverse the Pentagon's decision. Kittery received a \$175,000 grant from the Department of Defense to outline the steps the town will take if the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard is on the list. But most in town are focused on saving the installation.

A sign hangs from a local pub reading "Let's all help save our shipyard."

Other residents have held rallies and letter-writing campaigns. Much of the effort has been driven by the Seacoast Shipyard Association. But "there has been a lot of support, even from people who have nothing to gain," says local resident John McCollett.

### **Long process ahead**

After all, gain is still possible before the final deadline. Friday's list is simply a starting point. Now it goes to the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission, a nonpartisan panel of experts appointed by President Bush earlier this year. Its members will review the Pentagon's preferences and amend them. Congress will review the final list in the fall, voting only up or down - it cannot make individual amendments.

Each affected community will have a chance to state its case before the panel. "That shouldn't be undervalued," says Mr. Ford. Yet in previous rounds, the commission has traditionally overturned only about 10 percent of the Pentagon's suggestions.

Founded in 1800, the Kittery shipyard first built wooden-hulled sailing vessels. It now refits and refuels nuclear-powered submarines. For town residents, attempts to close the shipyard are as much a part of the local climate as harsh New England winters.

On a recent day, cranes moved through the air, transporting parts and equipment to the shops working on two submarines. But few argue that the base's significance has not declined over the years. During World War II the payrolls exceeded 20,000 employees. Decades ago, residents had to govern their lives around yard traffic. But the numbers of those working there have gradually diminished.

The Defense Department has tried to be clear about the purpose behind this year's closures: The national economy and even cost savings are secondary. This is about crafting the best possible network of bases to support the military as it changes from a cumbersome cold war behemoth to a more flexible strike force.

"How can we improve the utilization of these assets to support the joint warfighter?" asks Philip Grone, the Pentagon undersecretary who oversees installations.

This focus appears to be helping US bases in some respects. The Pentagon is expected to comprehensively restructure its bases overseas, which could bring thousands of troops home and ease domestic base cuts to less than half the 24 percent of surplus capacity long projected.

But that is little consolation to the people of Kittery. According to the Seacoast Shipyard Association, the civilian payroll exceeds \$318 million, and purchases throughout New England account for more than \$30 million a year.

Gil Caouette, a quality assurance inspector at the Navy Yard for more than 30 years, says he is expecting to be unemployed when he returns from a fly fishing trip next week. But, with his handy-man skills and being close to retirement, he has options. "It is the young kids," he says, who he most empathizes with.

Closure will surely impact local businesses like the Navy Yard Bar & Billiards that rely on the bulk of out-of-towners who pass through the shipyard year-round.

### **Bouncing back**

Kittery is not the only place on edge in the face of the BRAC process. Texas and South Carolina, for example, have bought open space around military bases to keep away urban sprawl. Alabama spent \$100 million of its own money to refurbish aging military facilities. And last year, Florida increased benefits for members of the armed forces.

But it's too late to plan such perks now. The Pentagon has said that any proposed changes will not be considered. Besides, to some observers, that's the wrong way to go about the next few months. "A lot of communities are calling us and asking how to fight it," says Hilarie Portell, spokeswoman for the Lowry Development Authority in Colorado. "We say you need to plan for the future."

When the Pentagon shut down Lowry Air Force Base a decade ago, the move had all the earmarks of a local disaster. The installation employed some 7,500 civilians and contributed \$300 million to the economy annually. But a redevelopment plan was in place before the base closed, and Thursday, the former airfield is home to 3,000 homes, 100 businesses, and 10 schools. One estimate suggests the site now generates \$4 billion a year.

By contrast, at the El Toro Marine Corps Air Station in California, local leaders were insistent on building a new international airport, even though the community was not behind it. The dispute lasted more than 10 years and cost more than \$100 million.

To be sure, base closings can be traumatic for communities, particularly small ones. But statistics show that 85 percent of the jobs lost in the previous four rounds have been recovered, according to the Government Accountability Office.

Says Mr. Grone: "Communities that have responded with foresight by coming together and by cooperative planning in most cases have done very well over the long term in trying to get the community back on its feet."

Estes says he worries that Kittery has not done enough Plan B thinking, but he says he also understands how hard it is to imagine life without the shipyard - the one thing that has bound the community together over two centuries.

Still he says: "As much as you have to fight, you also have to plan ahead."

Philadelphia Inquirer  
May 12, 2005

### **Base's Neighbors Brace For Word On Closings**

By Marc Schogol, Inquirer Staff Writer

Things are not calm on the eve of battle in Willow Grove.

Tomorrow, the Pentagon is expected to release a list of proposed base closings, and the wait is an anxious one for area businesses and residents who don't want the Willow Grove Naval Air Station and Joint Reserve Center scrapped.

"It would affect us financially, spiritually and morally," said John Williamson, who runs Williamson Restaurant in Horsham, Montgomery County. The base, established in 1943, is nearby - north of the Pennsylvania Turnpike off Route 611.

Williamson said yesterday that personnel from the base often have special events at his restaurant. While he couldn't give an exact dollar figure, he said the base's closing "definitely would have an impact on our bottom line."

But more important, losing the base would mean the community would lose a little heart.

After some serious local flooding five or six years ago, several women and children were stuck in their cars, Williamson said. Some Navy men who were at the restaurant for a wedding went right into action.

"The guys stripped down out of uniform and rescued the women and children," Williamson said. "They're great neighbors."

Speaking of uniforms, about 200 to 250 are cleaned each week at Horsham Wonder Cleaners & Launderers, manager Joe Dudek said yesterday. "We go up to the base and have a tailor shop in the store up there where we pick up and drop off dry cleaning," he said. "We do tailoring for them."

Dudek said the base generates about 25 percent of the business at Wonder Cleaners and that two of its eight employees probably would lose their jobs if the base closed.

Across from the base, John Burch, manager of C&C Ford, said the car dealership would lose a lot of customers.

"We rent them cars, sell them cars, and service them," said Burch, adding that the dealership had an account to take care of the base's fleet of six to eight security cars.

Pennsylvania's top officials and local elected and community leaders have said closing the base would be militarily and economically disastrous, and that they would fight any recommendation to do so during the lengthy review and approval process.

Even people who live close enough to the base to have their chandeliers shake when the planes pass overhead said that they, too, oppose closing Willow Grove.

Over the years, some residents have expressed concerns about safety, especially after a Navy F-14 Tomcat crashed near a row of houses during an air show in June 2000, killing the two crew members.

"I'm not in favor of the air shows - they should do them over the ocean," said Susan Hagenbuch, 51, who has lived in Horsham next to the base for 45 years. But on a day-to-day basis, she said, "you get used to the planes after a while."

If the base was closed, Hagenbuch worried that "we'd end up with all kinds of development and [higher] school taxes."

And Emily Henriques, 59, who lives not far from the base in Warrington, was worried about weakening national defense.

"When we had [the 9/11] hijackers, that place was busy," she said. "So obviously, it's needed."

Washington Post  
May 11, 2005  
Pg. 3

### **Calif. Towns Lobby To Stop Base Closing**

#### ***Officials Highlight Area's Usefulness***

By Kimberly Edds and Amy Argetsinger, Washington Post Staff Writers

YUBA CITY, Calif., May 10 -- If the Air Force closes its 63-year-old base in this sprawling valley of peach orchards and cow pastures, the effect will be nothing less than catastrophic, local officials insist: 6,000 military residents would leave homes here, and more than 2,000 civilian jobs would disappear. Businesses would lose many of their customers, and five public schools would probably have to close. In all, a \$1.2 billion loss to the economies of eight counties.

Yet none of that, ultimately, will matter to Pentagon analysts deciding this week which of the nation's 3,700 military installations to recommend for cost-saving closures. So in its impassioned campaign to keep Beale Air Force Base off the list, local organizers instead mounted a lobbying effort that markets the merits of the base to its own chiefs back in Washington -- the wide-open spaces free of flight restrictions, the prime location for monitoring missiles over the Pacific, the warm support of military-friendly neighbors.

A campaign, in other words, that is less about how much they need the Air Force than how much the Air Force needs Beale.

"We may be small, but we're the mouse that roars," said Tim Johnson, executive director of the Yuba-Sutter Economic Development Corp., "and we're going to tell the government that we play a significant role in the Department of Defense."

For communities across the nation, years of feverish booster efforts are coming to a head this week as Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld prepares to release the first new list of recommended base cuts and restructurings in a decade.

From pep rallies in Columbus, Ohio, to letter-writing campaigns out of Kittery, Maine, communities have labored to make the case that their bases should be the ones the Pentagon relies on in its leaner years to come. In some cases, state and local governments have gone out of their way to make the surroundings nicer for military populations -- improving roads around bases, extending tuition benefits or discounting utilities for people in uniform.

Maryland officials, concerned about the fate of Patuxent River Naval Air Station and Indian Head Division, passed a bill to make housing on its 11 major bases tax-free. Virginia legislators recently approved laws offering better life insurance coverage for military employees and economic development incentives for base expansion as state leaders closely monitor Forts Eustis and Monroe and Oceana Naval Air Station and the heavy concentration of defense leased office space in Northern Virginia.

Many communities have hired lobbyists to help make their case.

Much of the frenzy stems from the fact that, compared with four rounds of base closures in 1988 through 1995, many community leaders and analysts say there are no obvious patterns in military restructuring to indicate which locales are most at risk.

And while political pleading -- occasionally on behalf of the economically neediest communities -- sometimes played a part in earlier decisions, this year's process has been designed to give more priority to global military needs than home-town concerns. Rumsfeld's recommendations must be approved first by a bipartisan Base Realignment and Closure Commission, then by President Bush and Congress; however, in past years, the bases singled out in the initial Pentagon list have generally sustained the recommended cuts.

"It's not based on jobs, nor should it be," said Jack Spencer, a senior policy analyst with the Heritage Foundation. "It's what's best for the nation's security moving forward."

In California, which has lost 29 bases since closings began 17 years ago, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger (R) appointed a special committee to coordinate lobbying efforts across the state.

"What you're seeing is a much more aggressive effort to maintain these bases," said Leon E. Panetta, the former Democratic congressman and White House chief of staff who co-chairs the committee. "You have to make the argument that these are very valuable military assets, and if you close them you lose something that can't be replicated anywhere else."

For the Yuba City area -- whose 11 percent unemployment rate actually marks a great improvement over a few years ago -- keeping Beale became a major crusade.

Two years ago a plucky coalition of elected officials and business leaders from across Yuba and Sutter counties began meeting monthly to plan their attack. Volunteers raised private dollars -- about \$60,000 short of their \$190,000 goal, as it turned out -- to finance the effort.

The group lobbied county officials to fix the pothole-scarred roads around the base, winning more than \$4.5 million in improvements. And they took their message to Washington.

The first meetings were discouraging, said Yuba County Supervisor Hal Stocker, one of several officials who made the trip in lieu of hiring expensive lobbyists. After five minutes with the Beale delegation, a Pentagon official stopped them short, saying every community had the same story, Stocker recalled.

So they learned to hone their message. Among their talking points: the unique geographic setting in a corner of the state that is still largely undeveloped, leaving plenty of space for the military to pursue classified projects; a runway that is the second largest in California and the only one authorized by the FAA for unmanned aircraft.

Local officials even led a successful lobbying campaign to encourage the Air Force to send its squadron of Global Hawk reconnaissance drones to Beale. When the first arrived at the base last October, the community held a week-long welcoming celebration.

While such homespun efforts may seem hokey, analysts say they could make a difference. "Base commanders don't want to be somewhere where they're going to spend the next two years with the Chamber of Commerce chewing them out," said John Pike, director of the Washington-based defense policy research group GlobalSecurity.com -- they want the promise of easy relations with the surrounding community.

For now, though, Beale neighbors know they can only wait for the announcement of a decision that is likely already made.

"At least we can look ourselves in the face and say at least we cared," said Doug Sloan, general manager of Yuba-Sutter Disposal Inc. and a member of the committee fighting to save the base. "At least we showed we cared."

*Argetsinger reported from Los Angeles. Staff writers Ann Scott Tyson and Spencer S. Hsu in Washington contributed to this report.*

Monterey County (CA) Herald  
May 10, 2005

## **NPS May Be Spared The Ax**

By Julia Reynolds, The Monterey County Herald

With military communities nationwide bracing for the base closure list to be unveiled this week, supporters of the Naval Postgraduate School heard strong rumblings Monday that the Monterey facility is safe--for now.

Sources close to the process said they understood that as recently as two weeks ago the postgraduate school was on the list of bases recommended for closure but was taken off late last week after intense lobbying by the state's Council on Base Support and Retention and calls from Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger.

"We've heard a lot of rumors recently and they're all good ones," Monterey Deputy City Manager Fred Cohn said late Monday.

Leon Panetta of Carmel Valley, co-chairman of the state base support council, would not confirm the new rumors, but said, "There were individuals who had been arguing to take (NPS) off the list. There was a little bit of internal debate -- one of the services said they didn't want to close their war college, so the Navy said, 'Then we won't close ours.'"

Panetta had mentioned earlier that former Secretary of State George Shultz "had written a letter to the Secretary of Defense about how important the naval school is."

Panetta, a former congressman and White House chief of staff, said several prominent people also sent letters emphasizing the school's research mission and support to commanders.

"I think some of the letters had some impact," Panetta said.



Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and his advisers completed the list over the weekend and held a wrap-up meeting Monday afternoon to discuss plans for releasing the list on Friday. Rumsfeld is scheduled to hold a news conference announcing the 2005 base closure list at 6:15 a.m. (PDT) Friday.

City Manager Fred Meurer was cautious, recalling that during a base-closure round a decade ago, the Defense Language Institute was initially off the list while NPS was on it.

"That all changed the day before the list was announced," Meurer said. "I don't believe in good news until I hear it from the secretary of defense. It isn't over until the secretary sings."

Until now, the conventional wisdom had been that the postgraduate school was almost assuredly slated for closure while the Defense Language Institute was almost certainly safe.

Panetta said he'll take part in a conference call at 9 a.m. Friday with other members of the state's Council on Base Support and Retention. Then he plans to attend a late-morning news conference with Rep. Sam Farr, D-Carmel, and Monterey Mayor Dan Albert at Monterey City Hall.

The closure list will be submitted to an independent commission that will hold hearings, starting with Rumsfeld's testimony on Monday.

The commission has until Sept. 8 to submit its final report to President Bush. It is the first base closing and realignment commission since 1995, a process so politically charged that for several years afterward Congress refused Pentagon efforts to initiate another round.

The Pentagon recently had said it was wasting taxpayer money by maintaining about 20 percent to 25 percent more base capacity than it needed, although Rumsfeld last week said the surplus may actually be only half that amount. His comments suggested the base closings will not be as severe as once feared.

Rumsfeld's announcement on Friday will focus on U.S. bases scheduled for closure or realignment, but the Pentagon also has plans to severely cut the number of overseas installations, a move that calls for bringing home 70,000 troops from Europe and Asia.

The withdrawal of tens of thousands of U.S. troops from Europe would reduce by nearly half the number of bases maintained by the Army in Europe, a senior Defense Department official said Monday.

Ray DuBois, acting undersecretary of the Army, told a Pentagon news conference that savings gained from abandoning those bases will be reinvested in new facilities for soldiers at U.S. bases.

DuBois said the Army has calculated exactly which brigades and other units are to move back to the United States, "by quarter, by fiscal year," and has proposed to Rumsfeld which U.S. bases they would be moved to. DuBois declined to disclose more details, saying Rumsfeld was "still chewing over" some of the recommendations.

"This is a very complex set of moves, interrelated set of moves," DuBois said.

*The Associated Press contributed to this article.*

Salt Lake Tribune  
May 8, 2005

## **Bases' Futures Intertwined**

### ***Dugway likely to be spared; Tooele Army Depot not so sure***

By Matthew D. LaPlante, The Salt Lake Tribune

Just outside Tinker Air Force Base's west gate, in a small patch of undeveloped land, is a turquoise sign painted with white letters.

It reads: "Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow . . ." and references a New Testament verse.

It's a mantra, of sorts, for the thousands whose lives are tied to the Oklahoma City base's fate. They're working to keep Tinker relevant and praying Defense Department officials take notice before deciding which installations should be shut down.

A list of bases recommended for closure or other change is expected this week.

In Utah, officials say they have no idea how things will turn out for northern Utah's Hill Air Force Base - one of the state's largest employers with 23,715 workers.

But the status of Tinker - along with that of Georgia's Robins Air Force Base - may hold some significant clues.

The three bases house the Air Force's only remaining air logistics centers, maintenance depots where workers build, repair and improve military hardware, from radios to rockets. Closing any of the three would require those remaining to take on a greater workload.

None appears to be in any such position. And although some missions held at Hill could be moved to facilities at Tinker and Robins, the northern Utah base's main roles appear unlikely to change.

**Depots get lean:** Starting in the early 1970s, the federal Government Accountability Office began issuing reports on excess capacity in the Defense Department's major maintenance depots. Service branches, however, took few steps toward depot consolidation.

In 1995, the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission shut down two of the Air Force's five air logistics centers.

"That was the wake-up call - and it's still a wake-up call," says Rick Mayfield, Utah's director of economic development at the time of the cuts. He now runs a group dedicated to protecting Utah's bases.

Immediately following the 1995 shutdowns, Air Force Material Command officials sought ways to consolidate the three remaining depots' missions. In 2002, the Air Force released a formal "master plan" in which depot duties were laid out for the next 20 years.

In the plan, the Air Force envisioned a system in which specific maintenance duties would be performed in only one location, staffed with highly trained crews.

Tinker would be responsible for the force's jet engines, bombers and aerial refuelers. Robins took over most electrical component work and oversaw maintenance on the cargo and surveillance air fleet. Hill was to be the Air Force center for landing gear, long-range missiles and fighter aircraft.

In keeping with its role as the fighter maintenance center, Hill performs all depot work for the F-16 Falcon and A-10 Warthog. Air Force planning documents indicate the northern Utah base should continue those missions until both aircraft are replaced by the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter around 2020.

**Still some redundant missions:** While Hill has been designated the fighter maintenance center, depot work for the F-15 Eagle remains at Robins.

Lt. Col. Alex Cruz expects the Air Force to let the F-15 live out its final days in Georgia, rather than take on the expense of moving the maintenance program across the country.

"I'm sorry that she is getting old at all," the maintenance officer says nostalgically as he walks under the wing of a fighter first introduced to Air Force aviators in 1974. "What will probably happen is that we will ramp down as the F/A-22 ramps up."

The F/A-22 Raptor, which debuts this year as the Eagle's replacement aircraft, is expected to be maintained at Hill. But that transition alone wouldn't end the logistics centers' redundancy.

Hill continues to perform depot maintenance on some of the Air Force's C-130s, even as most similar aircraft have moved to Robins. All three air logistics centers maintain separate software operations. All three also house battle damage repair teams that perform repairs on aircraft damaged by hostile gunfire.

There also is an active air wing component at each base - Hill's is made up of two Falcon fighter wings, one active and one reserve. Such missions potentially could be moved anywhere where there is a hangar and runway.

But would consolidation of all duplicated missions make one of the three depots unnecessary? Three retired Air Force generals doubt it.

**The generals fight on:** Nearly a decade ago, Richard Burpee was visiting Texas, hoping to lure skilled workers to Tinker after San Antonio's Kelly Air Force Base was closed.

"A lot of them didn't want to come here at first," the former Tinker commander says of the thousands of workers who faced layoff or relocation. "Now you couldn't pay them to leave."

Burpee, who since retirement has fought to keep the base open on behalf of the Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce, wears a relaxed expression as he sits in his downtown office and speaks of the process that has resulted in nearly 100 major closures since 1988. The former lieutenant general is unconcerned that worker hungry representatives from Utah or Georgia could soon be making an appearance in his state.

"That ain't gonna happen here," the sandy-haired man says. "It's different than last time. Now, each of the air logistics centers has a separate but distinct function."

Nine hundred miles to the east, Ron Smith shares his former colleague's assessment.

"We spend a hell of a lot more time planning to keep Robins open than to see it closed," says Smith, who served as commander of the Georgia base before retiring in 1998.

Smith also served at Hill, as director of maintenance, from 1988 to 1991. And he did a tour at Tinker. He expects all three to survive.

"We're not talking about three different depot systems," the lanky former major general says. "This is one integrated depot system."

Retired Gen. James Davis, who served as a commissioner in the 1995 realignment round that resulted in the closure of two air logistics centers, agrees with Smith and Burpee.

"It will be a cold day in hell when they close Hill," he says.

**Space matters:** The Pentagon has collected thousands of pages of data on each base - reviewing everything from the local cost of living to how much each installation spends on lawn maintenance.

But one factor may trump all others: space.

Aviators on approach to Robins' 12,000-foot runway glide over a sprawling green landscape - thousands of untouched acres of forested wetland.

**It's pretty land:** Good for hunting and fishing. But not for building.

"We have no physical land for expansion," says Robins' planning director, George Falldine. "We couldn't accept a mission that would require any major space."

For instance, as big as Robins' footprint may be, there would be no place to put Tinker's city-sized jet engine repair facility, known as Building 3001.

More than 6,000 people work the day shift in the enormous building - three-quarters of a mile long and big enough to house more than a dozen of the world's largest Wal-Mart stores. Even if the building's operations moved into multiple smaller facilities - a move experts say would drastically reduce efficiency - it would be difficult to find space at Hill.

"Those engines aren't going anywhere," says Mayfield, the former Utah economic director and current Utah Defense Alliance leader.

Similarly, neither of the other two air logistics centers has the capacity to accept Hill's Intercontinental Ballistic Missile maintenance mission. Nearby Utah Test and Training Range is the only place in the United States where such weapons can be destroyed in accordance with arms reduction treaties.

Nor could the other bases find room for the 340 munition storage structures located in the heart of Hill's 6,802-acre base - though it is possible that mission could be moved to another munitions facility.

"I think if you look at the missions and workload of each of the facilities, the conclusions you have to draw is: If you don't do it here, where would you do it?" Mayfield asks.

But while there may not be enough space at any of the centers to accept the others' specific missions, officials at all three logistics centers say they do have the capacity to take on additional work similar to what they currently do.

**The Air Force-Navy game:** Tinker maintenance crews already work on the engines for the Navy's F-14 Tomcat.

"Why not the F/A-18 as well?" Burpee asks of the Navy's fighter-attack workhorse, known as the Hornet. "And why couldn't Hill do the landing gear for all of the Navy's airplanes?"

Taking on joint work would fill one of the Pentagon's top requirements for realignment. It also happens to be one of the main ways federal auditors have recommended saving money.

There is precedent for such consolidation at Hill. The northern Utah depot already handles 70 percent of the landing gear work for all of the nation's military.

Hill also has experience overhauling Navy jets. In 1993, 36 Hornets were flown to Utah for depot maintenance. The program lasted a year before the Navy decided to end the relationship, citing increased costs.

A General Accounting Office report issued in 1996 revealed the Air Force's costs for repairing the Hornets were, in fact, lower than the Navy's. Consolidation of depot work entirely, the federal auditing agency has since noted, would save much more money.

But if the Air Force could fix the Navy's gear, couldn't the Navy just as well take work away from the Air Force?

Smith doesn't think that will happen. "The Air Force depots are by far larger than others service depots," he says.

Indeed, the Navy's largest air logistics center, Naval Aviation Depot North Island in Southern California, employs about 4,000 workers - about a third of the number employed at the Ogden Air Logistics Center.

**A hopeful trinity:** A nine-member panel appointed by the president and congressional leaders will have four months to review the Pentagon's realignment list after it is released.

Though commission members - including former Utah Congressman and longtime Hill advocate Jim Hansen - will spread out across the nation to hear the testimony of those affected by the closures, they have little power to change the Defense Department's list.

Military officials say the list will be based on a very simple set of criteria: Eight standards in total, with four designated as having priority over the others.

The priorities include readiness for joint-service war fighting, land availability, capacity to respond to military contingencies and cost of operations.

"You take the criteria the Defense Department put out to evaluate bases and our logistics centers - all of them - meet that criteria," Burpee says.

But any one can't do it alone. And that may be the best indication of their collective survival.

### **Hill Air Force Base**

*A 1995 Inside the Pentagon article called Hill "the Pentagon's first choice for closure" among Air Force depots, and said McClellan and Kelly Air Force Bases were next on the list. Air Force officials denied the report and Hill was spared. The runners up got the ax.*

Why it's unlikely to close: Hill's ICBM mission has been called "unmovable" by Air Force officials. Proximity to the Utah Test and Training Range is a plus. And the depot's munitions storage areas would be difficult to move onto another base.

SIZE: 6,802 acres; ALC WORKERS: 12,100

MAJOR SYSTEMS: F-16 Falcon, C-130 Hercules, A-10 Thunderbolt, ICBMs, general landing gear maintenance

ALSO HOME TO: 388th Fighter Wing, 419th Reserve Fighter Wing, Defense Information Systems Agency, Utah Test and Training Range.

**Robins Air Force Base, Ga.** -- Moving Robins' large avionics and airlift maintenance missions would be costly. The Georgia base's employees also enjoy the lowest cost of living.

SIZE: 8,435 acres; ALC WORKERS: 12,500

MAJOR SYSTEMS: F-15 Eagle, C-130 Hercules, C-5 Galaxy, C-17 Globemaster, U-2 Dragon Lady, E-8 Joint STARS, general avionics maintenance

ALSO HOME TO: Air Force Reserve Command, 19th Air Refueling Group

**Tinker Air Force Base, Okla.** -- Tinker's 7.2-million-square-foot engine overhaul shop is a model in industrial efficiency. It couldn't fit on any of the other Air Logistic Center bases.

SIZE: 5,000 acres; ALC WORKERS: 14,000

MAJOR SYSTEMS: B-1B, B-2 Spirit, B-52 Stratofortress, E-3 Sentry, E-6 Mercury, general engine maintenance.

ALSO HOME TO: Navy's Strategic Communications Wing 1, the first Navy wing to base on an Air Force Installation.

## **BRAC 2005 - process sets stage for Future Infrastructure**

11 May 2005 Defense Systems Daily (UK)

The 2005 base realignment and closure process will set the stage for the military well into the future, Defense Department officials said in Washington.

Officials said this is the best chance the department will have to reset the force to meet the challenges of the 21st century. "We don't know where the next threat will come from, but we know one will come, and we must be ready," said a senior DoD official.

Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld's recommendations for base closure and realignment are due to the nine-member BRAC commission "not later than" 16 May.

The BRAC process will allow DoD to "rationalise" its infrastructure to match what planners believe will be the force structure for the future, said Michael W. Wynne, undersecretary for acquisition, technology and logistics, during a Pentagon briefing. The changes, he said, will allow DoD to put in place the infrastructure needed to continue the transformation process.

"We tried to think about how to maximise joint utilisation," Wynne said. This will allow the services to better share resources and improve efficiency, he said. It will also allow the services to facilitate joint operations and joint training.

Finally, the process will "convert waste to warfighting," Wynne said, noting that resources now devoted to maintaining capabilities no longer needed take money away "from the tip of the spear."

Philip W. Grone, deputy undersecretary for installations and environment, agreed with Wynne's assessment. In the four previous BRAC rounds - 1988, 1991, 1993 and 1995 - the department went through 97 major closings, 55 major restructurings and 235 "minor actions." The net savings through fiscal 2001 was about \$18 billion. The yearly saving since 2001 is \$7.3 billion.

Grone went over the timeline for the process. He said Rumsfeld must present his recommendations to the BRAC Commission no later than May 16. The commission - chaired by former Veterans Affairs Secretary Anthony Principi - will hold hearings and visit installations through September.

At that point, they will turn their recommendations over to President Bush for his review and approval, Grone said. The list has an "all or nothing" provision. The president must accept or reject the list in total. If he approves, the process moves to Congress.

If the president disagrees with portions of the list, he can return it once to the commission. He may include specific recommendations. The commission can take the list and "change it or not. It's up to them," Grone said, and then return it to the president. If the president still disagrees, the process ends. No president has disapproved a BRAC list.

In Congress, it is still an all-or-nothing effort, Grone explained. Congress can disapprove the list or do nothing, and after 45 days the list becomes law. If all goes well, DoD can begin implementing the law sometime in December, he said.

There are a couple of changes in the process from previous BRAC rounds. First, the recommendations of joint cross-service groups - looking at common functions across the services - have been part of the process. In the past, joint teams could only advise the services.

Military value is the primary consideration for base closure and realignment, but Congress specifically ordered DoD officials to consider surge capabilities in their deliberations, officials said.

*By Jim Garamone American Forces Press Service*